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Peace Talks Delegations

The Jordanian delegation's departure for Washington has been put off "until further notice," according to Amman television, which cited a Foreign Ministry statement blaming the move on Israel's planned deportation of 12 Palestinians. A Syrian Foreign Ministry statement reported by SANA cited the same reason for postponing its delegation's departure, but did not specify for how long. The Lebanese foreign minister announced the same for his delegation, telling Voice of Lebanon that the country "cannot be the initiator of splitting up the Arab ranks." The Palestinian spokeswoman explained her delegation's decision to delay travel in an interview broadcast by Jerusalem's Arabic-language radio. Meanwhile, the Israeli delegation departed for Washington, Jerusalem radio reported; no "significant progress" was expected, delegation members told Tel Aviv radio.

Egypt

President Mubarak and Israeli Prime Minister Shamir discussed by telephone Israel's deportation decision, according to Cairo radio, which also reported on talks between Mubarak and Yasir 'Arafat. MENA, meanwhile, covered talks between 'Arafat and Foreign Minister Musa. Cairo radio broadcast the prime minister's government policy statement.

Iraq

Saddam delivered an Army Day address, reported by INA. A Foreign Ministry spokesman criticized "groundless" U.S. statements on compliance with UN Security Resolutions 706 and 712, INA reported. A foreign affairs official criticized UN resolutions concerning the country's sale of oil, the agency disclosed; Baghdad radio reported on similar remarks by the oil minister. Government operations against embassies of countries that supported Desert Storm are to begin on 17 January, according to opposition sources cited by the Kuwaiti paper AL-WATAN and reported by the clandestine Voice of the Iraqi People.

Syria

Yasir 'Arafat headed a delegation that held talks with al-Asad, Damascus radio reported. Earlier, the foreign minister met the PLO's Faruq Qaddumi, the radio disclosed.

Jordan

King Husayn conferred with Yasir 'Arafat, Amman television reported. The prime minister received Faruq Qaddumi, Amman radio disclosed.

Palestinian Affairs

Faruq Qaddumi wrote an article in the East Jerusalem paper AL-FAJR on developments in the peace process.

Algeria

The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) urged the Army to support election results, according to Algiers radio, which also interviewed an FIS member who warned security forces against actions aimed at his group.

Inter-Arab Affairs

The Council of Arab Interior Ministers issued a three-point statement concerning terrorism and the settlement of disputes by legal means, Tripoli television reported. The Islamic Conference Organization "sharply condemned" Israel's decision to deport Palestinian activists, SPA disclosed.

Sudan

The Revolution Command Council will transfer its legislative powers to the transitional national congress due to be formed soon, according to a statement by 'Umar al-Bashir and reported by SUNA. Al-Bashir elaborated further on the arrangement in a media briefing reported by MENA. The United Arab Emirates ambassador and two diplomats were declared persona non grata and expelled in a reciprocity move, SUNA disclosed; further details were disclosed by WAKH.

Israel

Leaders and opposition members commented on the prospective deportation of Palestinian "terrorists," media reported.

Afghanistan

Najibollah's offer to resign in favor of the former king was rejected by resistance leaders, whose sources said that both men were "highly controversial" and thus unacceptable, the Islamabad paper THE MUSLIM reported. Mojahedin released a U.S. citizen captured six months ago, Islamabad radio reported.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Convenes Emergency Meeting on Somalia

NC0501122692 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] An emergency Arab League meeting began at the League's headquarters in Cairo today. The meeting, which is being chaired by Lebanese delegate 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Sulh, will discuss the deteriorating situation in Somalia.

Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid attended the meeting, which was convened at Egypt's request. [Paris AFP in English at 1207 GMT, in a report on the Arab League session, adds that "Egypt called for the meeting given 'the need to take necessary measures to end the bloodletting in Somalia.'"]

League To Provide 'Urgent Aid'

NC0501160592 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] The Arab League Council has called on all Somali warring factions to stop fighting immediately in preparation for resolving their differences peacefully. At the end of today's emergency meeting in Cairo to discuss the deteriorating situation in Somalia, the Arab League decided that Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid would consult with member foreign ministers to form a ministerial committee to hold urgent contacts with parties to the conflict, and invite them to an urgent meeting within the Arab League framework. The Arab League will provide Somalia with urgent aid, donated by all Arab countries, to enable the Somali people to overcome their hard living conditions. The league also decided to empower its secretary general to open a special account for financial aid to Somalia. The Arab League will keep the session open to follow up developments in fraternal Somalia.

Arab Interior Ministers Council Meets 3 Jan

LD0401002592 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Report by correspondent Noureddine Alhaj Salim on the opening of the ninth session of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers in Tunis on 3 January]

[Text] This session will continue until 5 January and will discuss a host of issues pertaining to the Arab security plan, the implementation of the provisional plan on applying the Arab strategy on the illegal use of drugs and narcotics, and the facilitation of movement and residence of Arab citizens in Arab countries, as well as many other issues pertaining to crime and cooperation among police bodies in Arab states to protect the environment from pollution. The council will also look into permanently establishing its headquarters in Tunis and electing a new secretary general.

Abdallah Kallel, minister of state and interior minister, delivered the head of state's speech in which he emphasized that the Arab and international arenas had witnessed major events and deep transformations since the previous session, which was held in Cairo in 1989. It was the conviction of everyone that what brought harmony among Arab peoples was greater and stronger than anything that divided them and that awareness of responsibility in confronting the challenges of the end of this century had now become the most important [word indistinct] in light of the rapid changes witnessed in the world.

The president said that convening the ninth session would undoubtedly provide us appropriate opportunity to study a host of issues which assume positions of priority as contributions to protect the Arab nation and strengthen its impregnability. These were issues of importance in view of their repercussions on various aspects of the Arab states' security and stability due to the multitude and diversity in terrorist, sabotage, criminal, and subversive phenomena which may aim at the safety of Arab societies.

The head of state praised the efforts made by all those who participated in working out the ideas for the first Arab security plan and called for the continuation and intensification of these efforts to achieve further effectiveness and usefulness with regard to Arab cooperation in that field. He also called for taking into consideration, when working out future security ideas, the possibilities of implementation and giving increasing significance to tangible action which would affect the state of security cooperation among Arab states and open the prospects of strengthening and developing it. He stressed that security had dimensions [words indistinct] not only at the level of materializing the concept of social defense but also at the level of securing that which brings about prosperity and growth as a means of supporting the stability of Arab peoples and protecting Arab societies from the threats of tension and [word indistinct], which required redoubling of efforts, in optimism and earnest cooperation, for spreading the causes of impregnability and safety and for the provision of comprehensive growth in all Arab countries on the basis that there will be no growth without security and no security without growth.

In the same context, the head of state called for further uniting of efforts to confront phenomena that pose great threats to Arab-Islamic societies where, here and there, the threat of deviation in all its forms was increasing, whether deviance at the intellectual level or in practice and behavior, such as organized crime, particularly the terrorism of gangs masquerading behind the guise of religion which believe only in violence and assassination and the spreading of sedition and anarchy as a program for realizing their long-term objective, which in fact basically contradicts the tolerant principles and values of our righteous religion. He added that if the threat of terrorism, in all its slogans and motives, required cooperation to destroy its causes and semblance, there was another threat which required confrontation and the tightening of control over it, namely the phenomenon of drugs because they aimed at destroying the foundation of the social structure. The head of state praised

the efforts which have been made for progress in the implementation of programs which were included in the Arab strategy on the illegal use of drugs and narcotics. The head of state also called for determined continuation and strengthening of Arab cooperation to make it possible to avert the infiltration of that killer disease through borders.

The president praised the role played and the great services offered by His Royal Highness Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz in his capacity as the honorary chairman of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers and the significance of his work with regard to the [word indistinct] the affairs of the Council.

After the head of state's address, Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the interior minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the honorary chairman of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers, delivered a speech in which he emphasized a host of challenges which disturbed the security reality in Arab countries. In that context, he called for overcoming the difficult circumstances through which the Arab nation was passing and establishing security cooperation on correct bases. He stressed Saudi Arabia's full commitment to all the issues that concern the Arab nation for the sake of an effective security cooperation that would take into account the present reality and perceive the challenges of the future.

Dr. Akram Nash'at Ibrahim, secretary general of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers, emphasized the distinctive achievements of the council which were represented in the exchange of information and finding the best ways and means to protect the internal security of the Arab homeland, combat crime in all its old and novel forms, and check the deviant and decadent trends which have been fed abroad.

Saudi Minister Speaks at Opening

LD0401003092 Riyadh SPA in English 1920 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Excerpt] Tunis, Jan 3, SPA—The Council of the Arab Interior Ministers started its 9th session here Friday.

The kingdom's delegation to the meeting is headed by Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz al Sa'ud, the minister of interior.

Addressing the opening session, Prince Nayif, who is also the honourary chairman of the council, emphasized the inalienable stance of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia over whatever might serve the best interests of the Arab and Islamic worlds. Prince Nayif stated that the kingdom, emanating from the eternal teachings of the Islam, will spare no effort to realise the true inter-Arab cooperation and to continue the real security cooperation which is deemed as a milestone demand for the stability of security for entire Arab peoples and states. Reminding the participants of the duty stipulated by the brotherhood and religion and the big responsibilities ahead, Prince Nayif suggested that the current march of cooperation should be corrected due to the untold consequences caused by the Iraqi vicious invasion of Kuwait last year and the support of some Arab parties to the aggression. He expressed regret that the atmosphere of the current phase of the Arab history is of less value than scheduled in the past due to the impacts of the Iraqi aggression of Kuwait. Prince Nayif told the conference that the Arab security was the first victim to fall as the result of the Iraqi aggression of Kuwait, which has extended the bridges of love and cooperation to all Arab countries. How can we, during this meeting or any other meeting under the Arab umbrella, remove this darkened tunnel full of suspicion, fear and trustless, how can we be able to get rid of the aggression implications and put them away from our dealings as security chiefs, and how can we separate between the security requirements of an individual state on the one hand and security requirements of our entire states on the other hand and between the principle and political elements triggered by the storming events witnessed by the region, Prince Nayif said. He said it is very difficult to differentiate between the security of each state and overall security of the Arab region and called on for the creation of a well-defined plan to cover the security requirements of the entire Arab region. He thanked the Tunisian leadership and people for the good accommodation and excellent facilities made for the meeting. [passage omitted]

Statement Issued Supporting Libya

LD0601010192 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] At the end of the work of its ninth session held last night in Tunis, the Council of Arab Interior Ministers unanimously issued the statement that follows:

The Council of Arab Interior Ministers, which met for its ninth session in Tunis from 3 to 4 January, follows with deep concern the threats to which the Great Socialist People's Libyan Jamahiriyah has been subjected. These threats endanger Libyan security and freedom and the achievements of its people.

The Council of Arab Interior Ministers expresses great regret at this approach, which contradicts all international customs and conventions regulating international relations in the modern era. The council affirms the resolution of the Arab League of nations in this regard, and emphasizes the following:

1. Condemnation of terrorism in all its manifestations.

2. Affirmation of the settlement of disputes by peaceful means in accordance with the principles of international law and international conventions, and the renunciation of the use of force and the imposition of economic sanctions.

3. Support for the Great Jamahiriyah in its approach and manner of dealing with the case in a legal manner and in accordance with international conventions and customs.

Gulf Summit Declaration Leads to 'Isolation'

PM3012163191 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 27 Dec 91 p1

['Abd-al-Bari 'Atwan article: "Glorious Gulf Isolation"]

[Excerpts] The "fraternity and loyalty" Gulf summit concluded its meetings Wednesday evening by issuing the "Kuwait declaration," which reinforced the foundations of official Gulf isolation and hostility toward Arabs and Arabism, firmly closing all doors to any inter-Arab rapprochement. It confirmed complete reliance on Western forces in matters of security and defense when it implicitly rejected an Omani proposal calling for the formation of a unified Gulf army.

It is difficult to know whether or not that declaration and the other resolutions included in the summit's final statement will meet the same fate as all previous Gulf summit resolutions on economic and security cooperation. What is certain, however, is that Kuwait, the state which hosted the summit conference, succeeded in passing on the virus of its shortsighted policy to the Gulf summit institution. Having, earlier, dragged all the Gulf states into the war trap, bankrupted them all, and undermined its own relations with its neighbors, it has now dashed all hopes of rapprochement between these states and the Arabs and has made its arrogant anti-Arab and anti-Arabist views the binding and official policy of all the region's states, the very same policy which had prevented most Arab people from sympathizing with it and its rulers at the time of the Iraqi invasion.

Article 2 of the said declaration "emphasized the Gulf Council [GCC] states' unified position against the Iraqi regime and the regimes which cooperated with it when it committed its sinful aggression against Kuwait, determination not to allow those regimes to breach that position, and insistence on that position until the Iraqi regime implements all the Security Council resolutions related to its aggression against Kuwait."

What is strange is that the Kuwait declaration, so full of hostility toward the Arabs, did not request the same things where Israel is concerned. In fact, that declaration and the summit's final statement sought to speed up "the normalization process" with Israel by confirming the GCC's unconditional agreement to attend the regional multilateral negotiations due to be held in Moscow at the end of January. That denotes a Gulf openness toward Israel and flagrant hostility towrad the Arabs on the pretext of "the Iraqi aggression" and support for it. [passage omitted]

The problem of the promoters of the now popular commodity of Gulf isolation is that they proceed on the basis of the false glory of their daydreams and refuse to see the fast-breaking changes sweeping the world. They believe that money can buy everything, including security. They cannot see beyond their own noses. [passage omitted]

Islamic Affairs

ICO 'Sharply' Condemns Israeli Deportations

LD0501145192 Riyadh SPA in English 1233 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Jeddah, Jan 5, SPA—The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) has sharply condemned the recent decision made by the Israeli Government to expel 12 Palestinians for the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. A statement issued by the Jeddah-based organization termed the decision as a suppressive, a flagrant violation of the international and the Geneva fourth convention.

The OIC urged the international community, particularly the sponsors of the peace conference, to interfere immediately and enforce Israel to cancel the decision and prevent it from making obstacles the might hinder the current peace process.

The OIC commended the flexibility shown by the Palestinian negotiators and the positive response made by the Palestinian and Arab delegations in the peace conference.

"By making such unjustified deportation on the eve of the scheduled peace talks in Washington, Israel made it clear that it does not interest in peace and that it plans to jeopardise the current peace process which has started in Madrid and Washington," the OIC said and appealed to the Security Council to make urgent measures to provide adequate international protection for the Palestinian people and its inalienable rights.

The statement deplored the Israeli continuous atrocities and suppressive measures against the residents of the occupied lands.

Muslim World League Leader Meets PRC Official

LD3012102791 Riyadh SPA in English 1924 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] Mecca, Dec 29, SPA—A Chinese Muslim official has commended the leading international Islamic role being undertaken by custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sa'ud. The remarks were made by Muhammad Hanafi Wan Yawin, deputy chairman of religious affairs department, [name and title as received] an affiliate of the State Council in the People's Republic and China, while he and his accompanied delegation were received by Dr 'Abdallah Omar Nasif, secretary general of the Muslim World League (MWL) here Sunday. The Chinese official expressed thanks and appreciation to King Fahd for his constant support for the Islamic societies, organizations and centres throughout the world and providing them with copies of the glorious Koran and relevant Islamic books. To his part, Dr Nasif, explained to the visiting delegation the great efforts being made by the MWL to serve Islam and Muslims through its continuous activities in the fields of relief, construction of mosques and schools, assistance for Islamic societies and centres and rendering of moral and material support for the Islamic callers. Meanwhile, the Chinese delegation visited today the compound of

the Umm-al-Qura university where it was greeted by Dr Rashid al-Rajeh, the rector of the university.

Palestinian Affairs

Delegates Delay U.S. Travel, Protest Deportations

'Ashrawi Comments on Postponement

JN0301113392 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1104 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Interview with Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, by Sa'id Mu'addi in Jerusalem on 3 January; carried within the "With the Midday Events" program—recorded]

[Text] [Mu'addi] Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, will the Palestinian side participate in the bilateral negotiations next week in Washington?

['Ashrawi] The Palestinian side today decided to suspend our travel to Washington. We are awaiting a political decision from the only political leadership entitled to make a decision on whether to participate or not; namely, the PLO. The PLO is currently holding a meeting to discuss these developments, as well as the issue as a whole. It will announce the appropriate decision in due course.

[Mu'addi] Members of the Palestinian side held consultations at noon today. What was the result?

['Ashrawi] It was decided to suspend travel to Washington pending the PLO's decision on the position toward the entire process.

[Mu'addi] Does this mean that the Palestinian side may not participate in the peace process?

['Ashrawi] This is part of the overall political decision. The evaluation of the peace process falls within the authority of the political Palestinian leadership. No decision was made concerning withdrawal or travel; it was decided only to suspend our travel until the appropriate decision has been made.

[Mu'addi] Has this been coordinated with Jordan?

['Ashrawi] There are now tangible and rapid moves to coordinate with Jordan and the other Arab sides. This is what is happening now.

[M'uaddi] When will the final decision on whether or not to travel to Washington be made?

['Ashrawi] We will not travel today. We are awaiting the response, which will come today or tomorrow perhaps.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Hanan, thank you very much.

['Ashrawi] You are welcome.

'Ashrawi Denies Talks To Be Boycotted

TA0301053592 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan 'Ashrawi has denied reports that Palestinians will not attend the Middle East peace talks in Washington next week. Earlier reports said the Palestinians would not attend in protest against the expulsion of the 12 Arab residents of the territories. The Palestinian delegation to the talks was due to have left yesterday for Amman, but delayed its departure due to the weather.

'Ashrawi on Israeli 'Iron-Fist' Policy

NC0601072292 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2235 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Cairo, 5 Jan (MENA)—Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, has said that the Palestinian delegation delayed its departure for the next round of talks in Washington because Israel expelled 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories.

In an interview with AL-AHRAM to be published 6 January, Dr. 'Ashrawi said that the deportation contributes to the complete picture of Israel's iron-fist policy against the Palestinian people living under occupation. She added that it is impossible for the Palestinian delegation to go to the United States while the Palestinians under occupation are being used as Israeli pawns.

The Palestinian spokeswoman said that she is fully aware that Israel wanted the delegation to delay its departure, thereby obstructing the peace process. Israel hoped to provoke the Palestinian delegation into not going to the negotiations, but we have responsibilities toward the Palestinian people and international will regarding Israeli actions, and Israel must not be permitted to use Palestinians as pawns.

Dr. 'Ashrawi said Israel's intention to torpedo the peace process is clear by its actions, such as allocating large sums of money for settlements, giving a free hand to the settlers, making the deportation decision, and forbidding the Israeli delegation to discuss concrete issues at the talks.

Asked whether she fears declining Palestinian public support for the peace process, she said that Israel is trying to exploit its position as an occupier state to influence public opinion through escalation, expulsions, and provocations of the Palestinian side. She said Palestinians are aware of this and continue to support the PLO's political position, despite the hardships they must endure under occupation.

She emphasized that the Palestinians insist on maintaining the framework, basis, and terms of reference contained in the invitation to the talks, which provided for two tracks, one Palestinian and one Jordanian. She said that the presence of Palestinians in the Jordanian

delegation or vice versa does not mean the two delegations are merged or that either party is forgotten.

Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi noted that the Palestinian and Arab delegations coordinated on the decision to postpone the departure for Washington.

Al-Husayni—Delegates Await PLO Instructions

TA0301183792 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Interview with Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Palestinian Guidance Committee by Yoni Ben-Menahem; on 3 January, place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Husayni] We have decided to suspend our departure for Washington and are awaiting the decisions that may be adopted by our political leadership, the PLO.

[Ben-Menahem] How do you see today the possibilities of holding the peace talks in Washington on 7 January?

[Al-Husayni] The reaction by the United States and its stance toward this Israeli behavior will be an extremely important indication that will make us adopt a sound decision on whether to go to Washington or not.

[Ben-Menahem] What do you expect today from the United States?

[Al-Husayni] What we demand from the United States is one thing and what we expect is another. We demand that the United States adopt a clear stance and not merely pay lip service on the issue of deportation, because nine resolutions by the Security Council condemn deportations. The time has come to turn from the phase of verbal condemnation to that of practical condemnation and imposition of sanctions.

[Ben-Menahem] Is there coordination between you and the other Arab delegations over their own participation in the peace talks?

[Al-Husayni] There is always coordination between us and the other Arab states. Faruq Qaddumi was in Amman yesterday and he held contacts with the Jordanian Government. Later he went to Damascus to hold contacts with the Syrians and I believe with the Lebanese also. Therefore, I can say that there will be further coordination at this phase between the Arab parties participating in the conference.

[Ben-Menahem] Mr. al-Husayni, is there a possibility that the peace talks between the Arab delegations will begin without the participation of the Palestinians?

[Al-Husayni] We do not believe that anything will be accomplished without the consent of the Palestinians. With the Palestinians and their consent is one thing, without them and their consent is another thing. There will be no talks without the consent of the Palestinians.

[Ben-Menahem] Thank you.

Qaddumi, 'Abd-Rabbuh on Announcement

NC0301195992 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Sa'd al-Silawi dispatch from Amman]

[Text] A Palestinian delegation led by Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, left Amman for Damascus today. Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, member of the PLO Executive Committee, is a member of the delegation.

The MBC has recorded Qaddumi's and 'Abd-Rabbuh's reactions to the Israeli occupation authorities' decision to deport 12 Palestinians:

[Begin Qaddumi recording] As I have said before, this is totally incompatible with the wish to establish peace. It is a declaration by Israel that it rejects peace. The country sponsoring the peace process must intervene. Had it not been for the United States and the USSR we would not have agreed to attend this conference and gone to the negotiating table. In the past, Israel claimed that the Arabs did not want to negotiate with it. When the Arabs came to the negotiating table, it began to place obstacles and difficulties in the way of the peace process. For this reason, the meeting of 7 January must be postponed until we hear that the United States will put pressure on Israel. We also want to hear from the entire world community. What is happening is clear proof that Israel does not want peace. The international community must intervene to save the peace process which it proposed and which we accepted. [end recording]

On the same issue, Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh outlined Palestinian steps on the Arab and international scenes.

[Begin 'Abd-Rabbuh recording] We began consulting with our Jordanian brothers here last night immediately after Israel announced that it was deporting 12 Palestinian citizens from the occupied territories. Today, we will meet with Syrian leaders. We are leaving for Damascus now. We will also make contacts with Egypt and other Arab brothers to adopt a unified Arab position, call for a meeting of the UN Security Council, and urge the parties sponsoring the Madrid conference, particularly the United States, to adopt a clear stance on this issue. [end recording]

Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, head of the Jordanian side to the Joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, announced that the Israeli actions are provocative and aim to undermine the peace process. He told MBC that so far no change has been made to the departure time of the plane that will transport the Jordanian delegation to Washington.

Sha'th Denies PLO Urged Rejection of Talks

NC0301160692 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1534 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] Cairo, 3 Jan (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat, has denied reports that the PLO urged members of the

Palestinian delegation participating in the peace talks to take place in Washington on 7 January to withdraw from these talks to protest the Israeli decision to expel 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories.

Dr. Sha'th mentioned that the Palestinian delegation taking part in the talks was supposed to leave the occupied territories today for Amman, but the delegation decided to stay in the occupied territories to express solidarity with the 12 Palestinians on whom the Israeli authorities issued the expulsion decision. This is the first expulsion of such a large number of Palestinians.

Dr. Nabil Sha'th told MENA that the expulsion decision has not been implemented so far, and that extensive efforts are under way to prevent its implementation. Foremost of these are efforts by the Egyptian Government and foreign minister to stop this unjust decision.

Dr. Sha'th said the Palestinian delegation will be in Washington when the talks start.

Decision 'Real Threat' to Peace Conference

JN0301153892 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, ambassador of the state of Palestine to Jordan, stressed that the Israeli occupation authorities' decision to expel 12 Palestinian citizens from their homeland constitutes a real threat to the peace conference.

In a statement to the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY, the Palestinian ambassador said it is unreasonable for the peace process to continue and go on its correct track in light of the continued repressive Israeli practices against the Palestinian people.

Memorandum Handed To U.S., Russian Consuls

JN0501165392 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 5 Jan 91

[Text] In Jerusalem yesterday, the Palestinian delegation presented a memorandum to the consuls of the two countries sponsoring the Middle East peace talks—the United States and Russia—concerning the Israeli decision the day before yesterday to deport 12 Palestinian citizens from their occupied homeland.

The memorandum states that such Israeli behavior will destroy the basis and point of reference for the entire peace process and makes it impossible to achieve a serious continuation of the talks, especially since the deportation policy hangs over every Palestinian, including the members of the Palestinian delegation.

The memorandum called on the United States and Russia, in their capacity as cosponsors and UN Security Council members, to use all means available to force the Israeli Government to rescind its decision.

The delegation also presented the two consuls with a lengthy memorandum regarding the peace talks in general.

U.S. Reaction Viewed 'Positively'

LD0501182292 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] It has been learned from an authorized Palestinian source in Tunisia that the PLO has received positively the U.S. reaction to the Israeli Government's decision to deport 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories. However, the PLO awaits a tangible gesture from the United States for the rescinding of this order.

The source added that the PLO Executive Committee will not rush into taking a decision on the matter of the departure of the Palestinian delegation to Washington.

Meanwhile, PLO official spokesman Ahmad 'Abd al-Rahman said yesterday that world reactions in general, and in particular that of the United States, which has strongly denounced the Israeli government's arbitrary decision, have spread a positive atmosphere within the PLO leadership. He pointed out that president 'Arafat has continued his Arab and international contacts to persuade Israel to rescind its decision which is aimed at disrupting the peace process.

PLO Requests Emergency UN Session

JN0301174092 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] The PLO has requested an emergency UN Security Council [UNSC] session to discuss the Zionist entity's decision to deport 12 Palestinians as well as the Zionist cabinet's decision to endorse a settlement budget for the occupied Arab territories.

In a related development, Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat today met with the ambassadors of Britain, the PRC, Russia, the European troika states, as well as the EEC representative in Tunis.

The PALESTINE NEWS AGENCY, WAFA, said that President 'Arafat explained to these ambassadors the dangers that these two decisions pose to the Middle East peace process. He also asked their countries to work to revoke them. 'Arafat also noted that the Palestinian leadership will consider the issue in light of the U.S. reaction to these Zionist provocations, which are aimed at sabotaging the peace process. (endall) 031700 mj/ Steele/mh 03/1754z dec ps080301.09

PLO Committee To Examine Israeli Move

LD0301172892 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] A higher Palestinian source in Tunis says the PLO Executive Committee today will examine the serious consequences of the Israeli Government's decision to expel 12 Palestinian residents from the occupied territories. The same source added that the Palestinian president is holding intensive contacts with a number of European countries to face up to such a serious decision.

Editorial: Israel Trying To 'Fragment' Arabs

TA0301150492 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic 30 Dec 91 p 1

[Editorial: "The Attempt To Divide Will Not Succeed"]

[Text] A few days before the start of the third round of the bilateral talks with the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation and the Syrian and Lebanese delegations, Israel has once again raised procedural problems. It did this by "proposing" to the United States that the bilateral talks with the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation be resumed in Washington on 7 January, while the bilateral talks with the Syrian and Lebanese delegations would be "gradually" resumed during the coming weeks.

This proposal lacks any justification and, in our opinion, has no logical basis. Rather, it reflects the Israeli desire to divide and fragment the unified Arab-Palestinian position based on rejecting the occupation in whatever shape and wherever it may be in the Arab territories. This also reveals an obvious Israeli attempt to separate the Arab and Palestinian dimensions.

Ultimately, what Israel wants can be summed up in achieving and concluding "agreements" with the Arab sides separately from the Palestinian course of the unified Arab cause, and, consequently, plunging this course into more complicated procedural problems.

But the existing Arab-Palestinian coordination will not be shaken and will never allow any attempt of this kind to succeed, because basically there will be no value to any Arab-Israeli "peace" or "understanding" as long as the talks do not lead to a just and comprehensive solution of the Palestinian problem—a solution whose most important basis should consist of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination on the soil of their homeland.

PLO's Sha'th Receives U.S. Entry Visa

TA0401192492 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, chairman of the Palestine National Council's Political Committee, has received an entry visa to the United States for the upcoming round of talks. This was reported by Palestinian sources to our correspondent Ehud Ya'ari. During the previous round of talks, the U.S. Administration refused to grant Sha'th a visa.

Intifadah Call for Protest Actions 6-12 January

LD0501185592 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Call issued by the Unified National Leadership of the Intifadah (UNLI) as an addendum to call no. 78]

[Text] O sons of the heroic intifadah, you who have again and again recorded and continue to record the most brilliant examples of heroism, sacrifice and steadfastness. The forces of the Zionist occupation continue their campaigns of tyranny, repression, and terrorism against the sons of our heroic people, with the aim of breaking their back and forcing them to surrender. The intensive campaigns of detention, total and partial curfews, the destruction and sealing of homes, the policy of assassinations, the pursuit of the heroes of the intifadah, and last but not least, the latest campaign of expulsion of 12 strugglers from among the sons of our people in the occupied Palestinian West Bank and the Gaza Strip, are only aimed at frustrating the determination of our strugglers, making our people despair, and practicing the harshest racist- fascist methods of oppression against them.

The occupation's rabid campaigns, however, will only make our people ready to make more sacrifices and more determined to continue the struggle. Our people, who have given tens of thousands of martyrs, and suffered hundreds of thousands of injuries and detainees, are more determined than ever to continue the struggle until the achievement of their objectives in freedom, independence, and the establishment of the independent state on its national soil.

O masses of our heroic people, the Zionist entity's denial of the legitimate rights of our people and its enduring and continuing violation of international law and customs, beginning with the fourth Geneva convention and ending with all the UN resolutions, requires from the international community and the United Nations, more than at any time in the past, to stand firm against these policies and work for the implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy, instead of rewarding this racist Zionist entity by repealing the resolution defining Zionism as a racist movement. The latest Zionist practices serve to confirm anew the fascist nature of the Zionist movement and its entity.

The UNLI also urges the UN Security Council to hold an urgent meeting to discuss the dimensions of that decision and the recent Zionist escalation campaign, and to endeavor to annul the expulsion order and secure international protection for our people.

O heroic masses, the Zionist entity would not have undertaken these practices without the unlimited support guaranteed to it by U.S. imperialism and the policy of double standards exercised by the United States and the international community with regard to the Palestine issue.

Valiant heroes of the intifadah, let us now stand together in close unity. The enemy does not distinguish between the sons of the honorable united people. The campaigns of killing, arrest, and expulsion have extended to the entire masses of our people. This requires that we cast away the seeds of discord and stand in a comprehensive national arena of unity, so that together we can confront the occupation soldiers and the herds of settlers. Let us work together to implement the following activities in protest against the recent expulsion campaign:

To declare 6, 8, and 9 January days of general strike and fierce escalation against the occupation soldiers and the herds of settlers;

On 7 January, to hold sit-ins at the headquarters of the International Red Cross, and to submit memoranda to international bodies in protest against the Zionist deportation policy;

To make 11 January a day in which swarming national demonstrations will be organized;

To stage, during the week 6-12 January, a week of anger and special escalation against the occupation and all its settlers.

[Signed] The Unified National Leadership of the Intifadah

PLO's Qaddumi Views Washington Talks

TA0301200392 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic 31 Dec 91 pp 1, 11

[By Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department: "About the Washington Meeting"]

[Text] With the convocation of the Madrid conference the settlement plans entered a new phase. The negotiating delegations met within world sight and earshot to launch the phase of serious debate to reach peaceful solutions to the Palestinian problem and the Middle East crisis. The Palestinian delegation participated for the first time as a principal member in an international conference to discuss the issue of peace and stability in the Arab region. This is proof of the Arab parties' sincere desire to seek a just peace. It was obvious from the first moments that Israel, due to an imbalance of forces, neither wants nor seeks peace but is moving away from it.

However, the new developments that led the parties in the Arab- Israeli conflict to be present at the negotiations table is by itself a novelty. It became apparent and it was also confirmed that security and peace begin and end with the Palestinian people and their cause.

Thus, we saw that many people entertained hopes for early progress in the negotiations following the continuous efforts by the United States that led to the convocation of the Madrid conference. I believe that Israel lost this round while the Palestinians scored many points. The aim of Shamir's presence was to divert world attention to him and his remarks, but the results were the opposite.

Signs of disagreement among members of the Israeli delegation were clear and obvious. Then the peace conference was transferred to Washington. Israel, with American silence, sought to catch its breath after it lost the momentum in the talks. The United States gave in and did not intervene, while aware of the fact that it was the host and sponsor and that the talks could not yield results nor could a settlement be achieved without its intervention.

The flexibility we have shown in the past and before participating in the peace conference was upon the request of the United States. Then why do we see the United States today saying that it will neither intervene nor exert pressure to correct the course of negotiations as agreed on with the United States and the former Soviet Union, not with the Israeli side? The Palestinian course is an independent course supported by our brothers on the Jordanian side, agreed on by the other parties, and repeatedly affirmed by all parties with no Israeli objection from the outset. When this was confirmed at the Madrid meetings on 30 October and in subsequent meetings and the Israeli delegation futilely tried to turn back the wheels of history, the talks entered a dead end and will remain there if the American mediator does not fulfill his responsibilities.

Before and during the Washington meeting, Israel, through the Zionist lobby, exerted intense pressure on the U.S. Administration by various political and economic means. The U.S. economy experienced an unprecedented recession during the Christmas holidays which brokers regard as one of the most important periods of business and sales. Zionist pressure also forced President Bush to dismiss Mr. Sununu, who is of Arab origin, from his post under the pretext that he was favoring the Arabs, while using other administrative shortcomings to attack him.

[Text] The Zionist lobby also directed pressure at the United Nations, and the United States gave in to this pressure to repeal the resolution considering Zionism a form of racism. This is a dangerous precedent in the history of the United Nations that will lead to marginalizing the UN and its resolutions and using the United Nations as a normal mechanism against clear historical facts.

Someone said: War is politics by other means, although it may be slow. We see in politics a struggle in a different guise because we firmly believe that the United States and Britain are among the Western countries that produced Israel, helped in its creation, preserved its survival, and will not abandon this mission no matter how circumstances might change.

Hence, we are engaged in a permanent political struggle against the foreign policy of these two countries and of other Western states supporting them, and also in a struggle in all its forms against Israel. Regardless of how strong Israel gets militarily, it will remain an odd and exceptional phenomenon in the history of the region because of the way it was born and the manner in which it reinforced its expansionist, settling, and aggressive existence and imposed its racist nature. Irrespective of the number of progressive decisions that seek to present Israel in an acceptable image, the reality and Israeli practices contradict this image.

Therefore, the Palestinian people, under their leadership, are committed before God and the Arab nation to continue their jihad regardless of how long this might take, while seeking a just peace and exerting efforts to achieve a comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict in solidarity and agreement with the Arab

brothers and their support for the Palestinian people's confrontation against Israel, its maneuvers, and attempts to gain time.

The Gulf war was no more than an attempt to undermine Arab consensus, prevent construction, progress, and development, and strike at the Arab deterrent force that is capable of confronting a challenge and defeating it. Unfortunately, it was a successful attempt to plunder Arab wealth and riches, loot the resources of the Arab nation, and leave it divided and weak. But the Palestinian people, with their small numbers and their relentless persistence, will remain the lever for the beginning of an Arab revival and a ray of hope for the restoration of joint Arab action and Arab awakening regardless of the sacrifices, the financial and political siege, and the efforts by some circles to act as middlemen in favor of the United States and induce us to accept what is unacceptable to us. We are alert and will not respond to all these false calls.

The Arab League became weak for reasons we all know. Arab discord has deprived the Arabs of a unified decision, and the remaining resentment has eaten away at the Arabs. Agreement on any decision within the Arab framework does not indicate a commitment to implement it. Moreover, commitment to pan-Arab causes no longer exists. Fear and alarm has also filled the hearts of some of us who lost faith in their cause, their people, and their future.

The wise Arab leaders should not stress the existence of calamity in Arab, Islamic, and international conferences. They should devote their time to overcoming Arab discord, resurrecting the Arab League, and removing all obstacles and impediments to Arab unity. We, the Palestinian people, will keep going on this path without fear or dread and will utter our words frankly and clearly, even though this might deprive us of sustenance.

PPSF Claims Responsibility for Jerusalem Blast

NC0601155392 Paris AFP in English
1511 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] Beirut, Jan 6 (AFP) - A radical Palestinian group, the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front (PPSF), on Monday claimed responsibility for a bomb attack in east Jerusalem Sunday that according to Israeli police caused no casualties.

The PPSF said in a communique released here that its "forces operating in the occupied state led a daring commando raid on January 5 on a Jerusalem supermarket that caused human losses and material damage to the enemy."

"The enemy confirmed the operation but, as usual, it denied any losses," the statement said, adding that the raid had been carried out in retaliation for an Israeli decision to expel 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories.

Israeli police reported that no one was hurt when a home-made bomb, placed in a pipe, went off in a supermarket in Gilo, a new sector of Jerusalem.

Algeria

Reaction to First Round of Elections Reported

Prime Minister Comments on Outcome

LD0501204992 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1931 GMT 5 Jan 92

[News conference by Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghozali with unidentified television, radio, and Algerian press agency correspondents in Algiers on 5 January—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Correspondent] Mr. Prime Minister, the first round of the legislative elections has taken place and the results have been announced, but the government has remained silent. What is the reason behind this silence?

[Ghozali] In the name of God, prayers and peace be upon God's messenger. The government is silent because in reality the people had to have their say on 26 December. But as the saying goes: When water is available there is no need to perform one's ablutions with anything else. In other words, the fact is that as far as it is concerned, the government did not remain silent and did not keep quiet but rather endeavored during six months to create the conditions to enable the people to have their say and to express it freely.

Today, eight days after the first round, the Constitutional Council will have its say after examining the reports it received from all constituencies and after looking into the appeals submitted to it. According to what we have heard, there are over 300 appeals. So much for the government's silence.

[Correspondent, in French] Mr. Prime Minister, what observations—I mean general observations—can you make after this first round both on the way that these elections were held and on the events that are to follow?

[Ghozali] As for my observations about what happened on 26 December and the ensuing results, I see two distinct aspects in this, and they need to be tackled. The first aspect concerns the conditions in which the first round was held, meaning what are its positive points and what are its negative points. As for the second aspect, it concerns the results of the first round of the elections themselves. What are the political indications and the political significance of the results? Yes, what are the lessons that we will derive, regardless of the conditions I have already spoken of and which engulfed the first round?

I believe that the results of the first round have brought us all a loud and clear message. The message came equally from those who cast their votes and those who did not, with the same clarity and the same strength. Many of us have tried to ignore this message, until it came to impose itself so persistently and so sharply.

As for the first part, namely the conditions under which the elections took place, my basic comment on this is as follows:

1. Contrary to what was being said here and there—I mean contrary to what observers abroad and even those inside our country expected, and despite the attempts made by some circles in the weeks directly preceding 26 December to disturb the social and political climate—the first round generally took place in an atmosphere of calm and reassurance, as testified to by all people inside and outside the country.

This date was an opportunity during which the Algerian people projected a good image, the image of a people who adhere to civic peace, the image of a people capable of aspiring to a mature and responsible exercise of democracy.

2. The number of those who did not participate, I mean those who abstained, was very large. The number of those who abstained was over a million votes—that is, close to 42

of registered voters, which is 13

of [word indistinct]. I believe that was not expected. You know that the government has been calling for the participation of the largest proportion of Algerians to vote because this was a historic opportunity, and all Algerians should have participated in this decisionmaking.

[Correspondent] Prime Minister, were the elections in the first round free and clean as you promised?

[Ghozali] Immediately after my appointment as head of this government, I made the following statement: I pledge to you that I will do my utmost to provide the necessary assurances for organizing free and clean elections. [passage omitted]

This is what the government has done. Today, is there any candidate who can claim that the government reneged on the pledges it made? What everybody notices is that the citizens in their thousands, Algerian journalists in their hundreds, and nearly 200 foreign journalists can all testify and have all followed the vote in every constituency and at 33,000 polling stations, and they can all testify that for its part the state or the government has acted with complete openness. This was seen by everybody both abroad and in the country. Add to all this 350,000 citizens, including 50,000 Algerian employees who were entrusted with or who carried out various tasks in the voting process and who swore under oath that they will respect the law.

I have here talked about what the government has done in total openness. But when we talk about the freedom of the elections and their cleanness, this freedom and this cleanness could not be achieved by one side only; in other words, one needs two hands to clap. In order to achieve this freedom and this cleanness, all the parties must work for that purpose.

What has really happened? Has this been achieved in reality? Unfortunately, the information we have received from all parts of the country and the things we have heard and noticed do not lead me to say, in my capacity

as prime minister, that the elections in the first round were characterized by the required level of freedom and cleanness which we sought in earnest to achieve. Under the duty of frankness to which I have adhered so far, I am compelled not to conceal anything from the people, particularly as the matter concerns events which thousands of citizens have lived through.

I am going to cite four of these facts. First, 900,000 citizens, men and women, did not receive their voting cards. This was a great act of negligence. What happened to prevent 900,000 citizens, men and women, from carrying out their constitutional right? At the same time, the country is going through difficult times. This is a very, very serious matter.

Second, nearly 1 million voting cards were considered void. They were considered void for reasons that must be carefully scrutinized, reasons that give rise to questions, and more still, give rise to doubts, for who is this manifestation, and who is benefiting from it? This is, too, is a serious, a very serious matter. How many citizens, men and women, went to the polling stations with a voting card in their hands and then were surprised to find that his or her name was not on the electoral list, at a time when the same citizen had indeed taken part in the 12 June 1990 [local] elections? This shows that he or she was registered on this list. Why was his or her name dropped from this list when he or she is in the same municipality, the same quarter, the same home, and still alive? How did this happen, and to benefit whom?

Fourth [as heard], on top of these questions or these events which give rise to serious questions, there are other causes which are no less grave in their harming of the freedom and cleanness of the elections: the attempts to influence people through intimidation, terrorizing by various means and tricks, including those which do not respect our sacrosanct sanctities.

These are some of the remarks and questions that I place before the people. I have raised them because I have heard them. They reached us and were conveyed to us by thousands of citizens, both male and female. But the final say in respect to these incidents lies with the Constitutional Council.

As for the government, we have abided and executed [our task] sincerely and truly. But I must admit, truly and sincerely, that what has taken place was not of the level that we, as government and as people, had aspired to.

[Correspondent] Mr. Prime Minister, what is your evaluation of the results of the first round, and what are their effects on political life in the country?

[Ghozali] I have already spoken of the first part, namely that which deals with the conditions that governed the first round. It remains for me to talk about the second part, namely the political significance and indications of the results of the first round, and the lessons that we must derive from these results.

At the beginning of my news conference I said that these elections have brought to us all a strong, clear, and loud message, one that comes equally from the citizens who voted and those who did not participate. The message is that the citizens are feeling great frustration, indeed absolute desperation. This message is on the one hand one of complete rejection, and on the other a demand for radical change.

As for the categorical rejection, in my opinion it concerns anything that is on the minds of citizens, anything that has caused the advancing and deep detrioration which has befallen our national economy and the concurrent social deviations and pestilence: burdensome foreign debt; a million and a half unemployed, mostly young people; hundreds of thousands of jobs threatened; a tragic shortage of housing, which citizens are complaining about. There is intense poverty on the one hand, which is coupled with exacerbated social differences on the other hand. What adds to its negative effects is the accompanying negative phenomena such as a parasitic economy, and add to that the severing of links between the ruler and the citizen. This is particularly due to vile political practices, led by the practice of sophism.

I would like to emphasize that I regard and I believe this message to be emanating equally from those who participated in the voting and those who did not. We must not ignore it and we must not try to underestimate it. Consequently, it is a cry that comes from the depth of the people who want nothing less than a fundamental change. [passage omitted]

It must be also said about this strong, legitimate popular desire that when the people first asked for a radical change, they found themselves laid open to kidnapping [by fundamentalists], confiscation, and deviation. Most Algerians, both men and women, are now asking themselves, in anxiety and concern, about what they consider to be an open attempt aimed at tarnishing this willingness, or tarnishing the nature of this willingness, and then using it or using democracy in order to get rid of democracy [by the fundamentalists], to confiscate freedom, to engage the people in sedition and slaughter, to strike national unity, and, in the final course, to impose a new domination characterized by exclusivity.

[Correspondent] Prime Minister, what is the basic lesson that you can draw from the first round of elections? Thank you.

[Ghozali] Therefore, as you see, sister, what I said is what is now causing concern to most Algerian men and women. We now face a painful paradox for this government, which came with a pledge, committed itself and promised to prepare free and clean legislative elections in order to entrench democracy in this homeland. Now this government, along with the majority of citizens, fears that this process could become merely a tool to eliminate democracy. Moreover, the Algerian Government, and—I emphasize it—the majority of Algerian men and women now fear for Algeria's fate itself. Thus,

the Algerian people are once again at a crossroads. The dangers are serious, real, and numerous. However, I am convinced that the Algerian people have sufficient material and human potential and moral capabilities to allow them to overcome the ordeals, and to confront the challenges with brilliant success. Thank you.

[Correspondent] Mr. Prime Minister, you have just said that what was achieved in this field was not of the level which the government had hoped for. The question I am putting to you is: Has the government achieved objectives other than the main objective, namely the holding of fair and clean elections?

[Ghozali] This was the main objective in the political field. But the government took on other issues, the foremost of which were financial, economic, and social issues. Naturally, this government has worked for six months, and the size, complexity, and accumulation of Algeria's problems had reached such a level that the government was unable, in that short period of time, to treat all these problems. However, the government established a program for itself. First, it had to confront the financial danger which was then threatening the country. The deficit in hard currency reserves was $1 billion.

The government has tried to tackle this precise point because this problem was directly affecting the people's daily life. You remember that we then did not even have money to buy medicine, let alone other goods, especially foodstuffs and goods that we need to utilize our production apparatus. Therefore, emergency action was required to face up to the danger of a foreign financial deficit. I can say, and this is a coincidence, that today, 26 December [as heard], we see ourselves—for the first time in two and one-half years—moving above the zero level in foreign exchange reserves. This is the first time in two and one-half years.

As for our foreign financial balance, we always also work to prepare for the future. It was not enough for us to escape our negative situation. We had to recover our financial capabilities in order to once more start utilizing the production apparatus, and to start again with investments. This is the sole solution to our social problems, including unemployment. Here came the draft law concerning mines and hydrocarbons, which was passed by the National People's Assembly. This law now enables Sonatrach [national hydrocarbon company] to deal with foreign entrepreneurs so that we may promote our production and resources. This is necessary for us to restore our financial strength. [passage omitted]

Appeals Denounce First Round

LD0401152492 Algiers APS in English 1026 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Algiers, 04/01/92 (APS)—341 appeals have been sent to the Constitutional Council and which will be examined by the six commissions of the council including members of the council and magistrates of the Supreme Court. In this context, these overtakings have been signaled by political parties, independent candidates or mere electors and concern the carrying out of the first round of the elections or the operations of counting of votes, according to reliable sources. All the appeals, the same source added, denounce the "moral [word indistinct]" and the "psychological repression" exercised on the electorate by militants and sympathizers of "a political party". The same source said that other processes have been used by the same party to influence the vote of persons. Moreover, the administration has been accused of laxism in a number of cases as it did not assume its responsibilities before the overtakings of militants of a [words indistinct].

FIS Warns Against Altering Results

LD0401000392 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Excerpt] The Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] today issued a statement following a Consultative Council meeting warning the sides that seek to distort the people's march, confiscate its will, and trifle with its destiny, of the consequences of opposing its choice. The statement also said that the council advises the media [al-mu'assasah al-i'lamiyyah] to pursue truth in reporting the news, to be characterized by objectivity in analyzing events and incidents, and to distance itself from the false interpretations of stands and statements. The FIS Consultative Council affirms at the end of its statement its determination to achieve its Islamic plan, which is based on God's book, his prophet's tradition—may God's prayers and blessings be upon him—and the path of the worthy ancestors.

Current FIS leader Abdelkader Hachani affirmed in the Friday prayers today at the Sunna Mosque in the capital that his party is determined to establish an Islamic state in Algeria.

For his part, Imam (Moughni), who was elected a deputy in the first round of the legislative elections, denied the existence of problems between the Army and his party or between the FIS and the FLN. Imam (Moughni) said that those who delude people about the existence of these problems are those who wish to spill blood. [passage omitted]

FIS—'Hostility' Toward Islamists Must End

LD0601095392 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0630 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Interview with Cheikh Rabah Kebir, member of the National Consultative Council of the Islamic Salvation Front, FIS, by unidentified correspondent, in the political parties' election time slot—live]

[Text] [Correspondent] Cheikh Rabah Kebir, how does the FIS view the Army, the police, and the gendarmerie?

[Rabah] Thank you. In name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Thanks be to God and God's prayers, and peace be upon the prophet Muhammad. God's peace, mercy, and blessing be upon you, sons of the Muslim Algerian people.

This question is indeed of great importance and significance, in view of the rumors constantly spread by the enemies of the Islamic solution. The Islamic state which the people are preparing to establish after the second round of elections needs the Army, the police, and the security forces. But we must find out what is the relationship between the Army and the people, the police and the people, and the gendarmerie and the people.

The relationship that existed in the past cannot at all continue. In the past, the regime consecrated a relationship of hostility between these vital institutions and the Army, the police, and the gendarmerie [as heard]. But the Islamic rule, whih the people are preparing to set up considers the national people's Army the descendent of the Liberation Army, whose task is to protect the people's choice and the sanctity of the nation.

Therefore, the Army should be equipped with all modern means to enable it to act as a deterrent against any force that might contemplate harming the security of the country.

Muslim Algerian people: This then is how the FIS views this institution. The same applies to the gendarmes and the security forces. It is time for peace between the people and these institutions which were created essentially to protect the people's choice, to defend the country, and to act against criminals and crime.

The use of the security forces against the advocates of the cause of God Almighty should cease. The use of the security forces against the political opposition should stop. Islam is a religion of freedom and one which guarantees freedom of expression and other individual freedoms. We do not need to pursue people in such matters. The duty of the gendarmes and the security forces is to combat corruption and crime and to pursue criminals. Then there will be true peace among all factions of the people.

There are prejudiced quarters which try to pit the people against each other. They try through their writings, for example, to pit the Army against the people.

The choice was made by the people with all its factions, members of the Army, members of the gendarmerie, and members of the security forces. The entire people said yes in one voice to the Islamic project. Then what justification is there for these moaning voices which enjoy no credibility in this homeland? In fact, today all those who reject the people's choice have become exposed; they fight Islam and the project of There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His messenger.

Algerian people: Be as we have known you—strong and gigantic—and show on 16 January that you support the cause of God.

FIS Calls on Army To Support Results

LD0501224192 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Rabah Kebir, a prominent leader of the Islamic Salvation Front, has called on the Army to protect the people's choice. Kebir, who was speaking on television on the occasion of the election campaign's second round, urged the Army, which he described as the vital force of the nation, not to yield to certain quarters which, he said, wish to shed Algerian blood.

Rabah Kebir urged the country's cadres not to emigrate. He said that the Islamic state which will be established by the FIS will not import cadres from abroad.

Cheikh Hachani recently said that if a shipload of Algerian cadres fled the leadership of the Islamic state, thousands of Islamic cadres would come to Algeria.

Hamas Movement Leader Comments

PM0301094092 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 30 Dec 91 p 3

[Interview with Mahfoud Nahnah, leader of the Islamic Society Movement, Hamas, by Qasiy Salih al-Darwish in Algiers; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Al-Darwish] The Hamas movement is one of the losing parties in the first round of the elections. How would you assess the first round?

[Nahnah] The elections which have been held in beloved Algeria are the first stage in the process of Algeria consulting the people. So the people have been consulted on a large scale. This is despite the reservations voiced by the Islamic Society Movement, Hamas, about the electoral system and election procedures on election day. Nevertheless, we definitely believe that our policy with regard to entering the election campaign and struggle was not a departure from our orientations and principles. This is because the movement had estimated that it would finish third or fourth.

And indeed we came third in most constituencies and fourth in a few constituencies, and in some cases we came second. So we have not made the mistake that the regime made in the past, when it turned the campaign into a confrontation between two parties. It seems that the the whole thing was organized very carefully. And that actually led to a change in calculations and produced results different from what had been expected. But generally speaking, the elections held seem to have been conducted smoothly despite the threats and arbitrary attempts made by both fronts: the National Liberation Front, through the laws and measures implemented on election day; and the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], through its threats and its desire to win votes at any price. But everything that has happened will contribute to the transformation process in Algeria... the tranformation from the one-party system to partial political pluralism. We had a one-party system and we are now experiencing a two-party system. [passage omitted]

[Al-Darwish] Does that mean that you believe that the FIS is objectively qualified to attain the Hamas movement's aims?

[Nahnah] We think that the Islamic plan—under which the FIS managed to carry out a major part of its political activity at the expense of the old and original political parties and at the expense of the Islamic movement of which we are an integral part—will inevitably serve part of the Hamas movement's plans. [passage omitted]

[Al-Darwish] In the event of the FIS' assumption of power, it will certainly establish "the Islamic state" as it sees it—in other words, in an environment of hostile people, cautious people, or people who are frightened by that. But the question is: Did the Algerian people when they voted for the FIS vote for entering such a phase?

[Nahnah] First, we are among those who respect the people's will. This is a fundamental question. And if the people see that the FIS has deviated or cannot persuade them to make the move toward Islam, they are likely to do what they did to the National Liberation Front and French colonialism. Like other peoples, the Algerian people reject injustice and humiliation, even if these are carried out in the name of religion or Islam. [passage omitted]

Socialist Forces Front Notes Appeals

LD0301221492 Paris France-Inter Radio Network in French 1800 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] In Algeria, the victory by the Islamic Salvation Front has been called into question. The results in 145 of the 430 constituencies are being questioned. In the first round of voting there were 341 appeals, which the Algerian Constitutional Council is currently examining. If these appeals are accepted, this could result in the partial or total voiding of the first round of voting, and therefore legally prevent the FIS from obtaining a practically certain victory while at the same time saving the National Liberation Front from crumbling. It is the party in power that submitted most of the appeals.

Ait Ahmed, the leader of the Socialist Forces Front, which came in second and organized yesterday's large demonstration, put the record straight when he spoke on the telephone to Guillaume Roland:

[Begin Ahmed recording] It is those who were really punished by the ballot box who want to cancel the elections and who have no respect for the Army and who are calling for it to intervene. We will participate in the electoral process in all legality until the end. It is a question of canceling the results in the constituencies where cheating is undeniable, where there is irrefutable proof that the vote has been doctored. It is also, in any case, an opportunity for the more than 5 million abstentions to assume their responsibility to vote. [end recording]

AMJD Calls for Middle Road

LD0501225992 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1800 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Mobilization is the order of the day. The stakes of the second round of the legislative elections are in fact perceived as that of the future of Algeria and of the contours of its future plan for society. Mr. Kasdi Merbah's Algerian Movement for Justice and Development [AMJD] wishes to be a path halfway between the two groups [Islamic and non-Islamic], whose theses are contradictory to say the least. To this effect, it has issued a call for the setting up of a national rally for the salvation of the nation.

According to its communique, the AMJD is fighting to promote dialogue and consultation and to resolve, as a priority, the crisis of confidence between the authorities and the people. To this effect, the AMJD has issued an appeal to the leadership of the Islamic Salvation Front to transform the aspirations of the broad social base into dynamic and concrete action. It has also issued an appeal to the authorities to watch over the observance of constitutional legality and the institutions of the Republic.

Finally, the movement has issued an appeal to all political leaders to place the national interest above personal or partisan interests. It has also issued an appeal to citizens to take their destinies in hand by taking an active part in the political, economic, social, and cultural life of the country and by choosing a plan for society from among those proposed to them in full knowledge of the facts.

Commentary on 'Wave of Horror' Following Results

LD0401161192 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Commentary by Ali Boudjadid]

[Text] A wave of horror has swept some circles following the announcement of the results of the first round of the legislative elections. Some quarters have rebelled against the choice made by the majority of voters, a fact which has revealed stands that many consider alien to the realities of our society. Here is a commentary on this matter by Ali Boudjadid:

[Begin Boudjadid recording] The talk on the second round of the legislative elections demands, of necessity, a review of the results of the first round to find out the weaknesses and strengths of the parties in the game in order to find the alternatives and the possiblities of alliances among the formations still in the arena. Naturally, this is a task for the influential elements of society such as the intelligentsia, the media, and the politicians through objective critical analysis to protect the democratic course. Thus, those who were unlucky in the elections would try to redress the situation on the basis of well-known principles known to all those who practice political partisan activity. These principles provide first for self-accountability followed by working at a later favorable stage to instigate and win over and rally the streets to their causes.

What the Algerian streets have seen and continue to see has exposed a new type of partisan leaderships which have their own concept of democracy which differs from the generally accepted concept. Those who have appointed themselves guardians of democracy in Algeria

before 26 December have reversed their stands after their failure to win the people's support, and instead of bringing themselves to task, they fell in the wrong.

The first fatal error that these parties which describe themselves as democratic made was their rejection of the verdict of the transparent ballot box, which reflects the choice of the majority of the people. Their second error was their call for general and sit-in strikes and the carrying out of all lawful and unlawful acts which constitute an instigation of civil disobedience and mutiny and the embroiling of the country in dangerous labyrinths. Their third act of plunder was their creation of an atmosphere of panic and fright among the citizens, thereby robbing them of security and reassurance and squandering their confidence in themselves and in their homeland.

These allegations were aided and exaggerated by a section of the Algerian information media, namely those speaking in Latin characters [as received], thereby joining in this way with the French information media in a psychological campaign of terror aimed at striking at national unity internally and harming Algerian credibility externally, particularly in the present economic conditions from which the country is suffering.

This is the logic of the organic bond of interests and intellectual and cultural subservience, as clearly manifested in the attempt to impose leaderships which have no true social bases. Thus, they have failed to understand and analyze Algerian society, despite the fact that a certain section of the national press had tried to present them as the alternative to the present regime. So they tried to present them in other than their true image, to magnify them, and to make national public opinion imagine that they were the only ones that hold the key to the country's problems. These midget idols, however, have failed their first test, thereby causing those with influence and interest and the beneficiaries of the regime to shake with them. The only solution lies in dealing with the new reality with all of its constant and variable facts within the rules of the game and within the framework of alliances which address the people in a language that they can understand. This in turn necessitates another commentary. [end recording]

Islamic Salvation Leader Questioned on 'Slander'

LD0501163992 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1200 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Mr. Abdelkader Hachani, who is in charge of the national provisional executive bureau of the Islamic Salvation Front, was questioned this morning by the magistrate who is to investigate the slander claim brought by the Ministry of National Defense. I remind you that the ministry has brought a case against Mr. Hachani for slandering the Ministry of National Defence and for insulting the lawful authorities with what he said during a rally in Constantine during the election campaign prior to the first round of the parliamentary elections.

According to the ministry, Mr. Hachani had—I quote—accused the national people's army and its authorities—I am still quoting—of imaginary and extremely serious acts, when alluding to the events in Guemar in which a border guards post was attacked by a group which said it belonged to the armed Islamic movement.

Al-Nahdah Forms Political Organization

LD0301235792 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1800 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] Following the creation of the National Committee for Safeguarding Algeria, Cheikh Jaballah's al-Nahdah movement has set up the National Rally for Protecting the People's Choice. In a communique which reached us at our editorial desk this afternoon, the al-Nahdah movement appeals to the vital forces of society, organizations, and personalities to join this rally to defend, as the communique puts it, the people's will and to safeguard its choice. The address of al-Nahdah's national headquarters is 4 Rue des Ecoles, near the Boulevard des Martyrs, in Algiers. The telephone number is: 650283; and if you call from outside Algiers or from Tipaza or Boumerdes, dial the 02 code first.

The al-Nahdah movement communique notes that the Algerian people expressed on 26 December their attachment to its authenticity and its loyalty to its past and its martyrs. As Algeria moves from the phase of tension and stability, the communique says, the al-Nahdah movement states it is surprised by, and I quote, an unexpected wave of reactions threatening the security of society and denying the people's will. Al-Nahdah appeals to the Republic's president to assume his responsibility, to protect this popular will, and to be loyal to his commitments. Finally, note that the al-Nahdah movement will tomorrow hold a news conference at the press club on Boulevard des Martyrs.

FFS Leader Comments on Results of Demonstration

LD0301144992 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] Yesterday 350,000 people were brought together in Algiers. They were answering a call by a movement whose influence was said to be limited to the mountainous areas. This movement is the FFS [Socialist Forces Front], led by Ait Ahmed. For the latter, yesterday's demonstration was of course a success, and this is what he told Assane Diop:

[Begin recording] [Ahmed] Never since independence have there been so many people. Never have people looked out for each other and been linked to each other to this extent. The tone of this demonstration has never been so national. The Algerian men and women came from everywhere. The majority of the demonstrators were women.

[Dasp] People were not only there under the FFS banner—that is your party—but the unionists also called for mobilization.

[Ahmed] These were last-hour calls. There were attempts to recover the situation at the last minute. We welcomed all those who came to join us on an individual basis, but the call was made by me and the demonstration was in every aspect organized by the FFS, which gave it all this cohesion. [end recording]

Egypt

Mubarak, Shamir Discuss Deportation Issue

NC0401185292 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] A telephone conversation was held this evening between President Husni Mubarak and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir to tackle the situation resulting from the deportation [as heard] of a number of Palestinians and the impact of this decision on the ongoing peace talks.

Musa Demands Halt to Deportations

NC0301154092 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1445 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] Cairo, 3 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa today commented on the Israeli decision to expel 12 Palestinians from the occupied Arab territories. He said: The operations of expulsion and deportation are considered violations of international law and reveal a clear discrimination in the treatment of Palestinians compared to others in the occupied Arab territories. He said Egypt demands that these measures, which violate international law and go against the spirit of the peace process, should be stopped.

He added that the continuation of these Israeli measures could delay the peace process and expose Israel's bad intentions regarding the future of coexistence and peaceful life in the region.

He asked Israel to retract these measures and held it responsible for the effects of this illegal behavior.

Mubarak, PLO's 'Arafat Discuss Washington Talks

NC0501081792 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0800 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak and Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat held a private session of talks at the presidential office in Heliopolis this morning. This is part of the Egyptian-Palestinian coordination prior to the resumption of the bilateral Middle East peace talks between Arab and Israeli delegations in Washington in the next few days.

The Palestinian president arrived in Cairo earlier today.

Musa, 'Arafat on Peace Talks

NC0501145092 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1255 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Cairo, 5 Jan (MENA)—Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat has emphasized the concern of the Palestinian and Arab sides to advance and continue the peace efforts and process that began in Madrid so that a comprehensive, just, and permanent peace can be reached. He said that peace must be established on the basis of international legality, the land-for-peace principle, the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 242, and the Palestinian people's legitimate political rights.

'Arafat said that, during his meeting with President Husni Mubarak today, he thanked him for the great efforts he has been exerting to advance the peace process and to resolve the problems resulting from Israeli intransigence and actions that obstruct the peace process and seek to torpedo it. This came in a news conference 'Arafat and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa held today at al-Andalus Palace, 'Arafat's place of residence during the visit.

Musa stressed that one of the foundations of the peace process is that Israel should deal with it in good faith and an unequivocal political will to participate in it in a practical and not formal way. He said that this is part of the continuing peace process in the Middle East, adding that we view what has happened and is happening in the occupied Arab land to be "against the peace process." He said: While we are paying attention to the continuation of the peace process, we also are concerned that Israel should be deterred from continuing measures that run counter to international law and conflict with the spirit of the peace process, the text of the invitation, and the terms of reference of the peace process. He said: Hence, the efforts being exerted by President Mubarak and Egyptian diplomacy to follow up this process and to seek to restrict the Israeli measures that "eat in the bones" of the peace process. He stressed that it must be understood that, inasmuch as we are interested in the peace process, we are concerned that Israel halt its measures that are incompatible with this process in order to help it continue.

At the outset of the news conference, 'Arafat said: It pleases me to say that I met with President Mubarak this morning and the Egyptian and Palestinian delegations attended part of the meeting. He noted that his bilateral meeting with President Mubarak focused on the peace efforts, particularly those being made to resume the Washington peace talks. He said: I thanked President Mubarak for his efforts of the past few days to stop the deportation of Palestinians. He pointed out that President Mubarak made several efforts, most importantly his personal contact with Israeli Prime Minister Shamir, along with the Egyptian Foreign Ministry's efforts. He noted that his talks with President Mubarak and the talks between the Egyptian and Palestinian delegations dealt with the steps that must be taken to propel the peace process and render the talks successful in hope of reaching a just and permanent peace that secures the

Palestinian people's legitimate, national, political rights in accordance with international legality and in line with U.S. President George Bush's 6 March initiative in which he outlined the land-for-peace formula, Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and the Palestinian people's legitimate political rights.

'Arafat said: We hope to be able to continue the peace process given the Israeli intransigence against our people. I cite some examples: In the past 48 hours, Israel made a decision to deport 12 of our prominent political cadres; Moshe Arens made a decision to form a fully armed guard; and the Israeli Knesset passed a resolution allocating 25 percent of the housing budget approved in the Israeli general budget to build settlements in the West Bank and in Gaza, not to mention what is being built in holy Jerusalem.

'Arafat said that the Palestinian leadership is still discussing the issue of the Palestinian delegation attending the Washington talks. We are in constant touch with our brothers in the occupied territory on this issue. I discussed this issue with President Mubarak today as well as the importance of continuing the peace process without giving in to Israeli conditions, actions, and crimes against our people, he said.

'Arafat said: This Arab stand in confronting Israel's decisions, especially its recent decision to deport 12 Palestinians; the Arab sides' support for the Palestinian position; and the postponement by Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon of the departure of their delegations to Washington clearly indicate that there is Arab coordination, which started at the meeting of the foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon. Moreover, the contacts that President Husni Mubarak and the Egyptian Government have held also indicate the firmness of the Arab stand and the common ground on which the Arab delegations stand.

'Arafat added: Israel's attempts to obstruct the peace march is a defeat for it and not a victory, because its actions violate international law. No crimes against international law should be committed while the negotiating process is continuing.

'Amr Musa said: Any party that tries to stop or obstruct the peace process cannot consider it a victory. Some quarters in Israel believe that the peace process will lead ultimately to Israel's withdrawal and to peace. Therefore, they want to maintain the present situation. However, their obstruction of the peace process will lead to very harmful results. Continuing the occupation will harm Israel.

'Amr Musa stressed: We will never accept the continuation of occupation and will not recognize it under any circumstances. Palestinian land must be returned and Palestinian rights must be restored. There is no doubt about this. If the peace process is obstructed, this will not be in Israel's interest because no Arab party will recognize Israel's occupation of Arab territories or the legality of its presence in the occupied territories, including Jerusalem.

'Amr Musa added: Therefore, the halting of the peace process will have far-reaching effects on stability, peace, and the hopes that the Middle East will move from a stage of occupation and turbulence to a stage of liberation, stability, and cooperation. The halting of the peace process will harm all the parties, including Israel.

'Arafat said: We did not go to the peace conference from a weak position. We went to the peace conference to establish a just and comprehensive peace that will take into consideration the legitimate national political rights of the Palestinian people. If Israel believes that its obstruction of peace will delay its withdrawal from occupied Palestinian and Arab lands, this will not lead to peace or stability in our region or in the whole world.

'Arafat indicated that contacts are being held with all Arab and international parties to confront the new developments caused by Israel.

'Arafat stressed that if Israel persists in its attempts to obstruct the peace process and violate international law, it is the responsibility of the two chairmen of the conference—the United States and Russia—to define the course of action and compel Israel to pursue a clear policy in this regard.

Asked whether his political adviser Dr. Nabil Sha'th has received a visa to enter the United States, 'Arafat said: We will wait and see.

'Arafat noted that the third phase of the talks, namely, the multilateral talks, will require a change in the composition of the Palestinian delegation in one way or another.

Asked about Kuwait's declaration at the end of the GCC's recent summit that certain measures will be taken against the states that supported the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, 'Arafat said: No comment.

Asked about Israel's attempts to prolong the talks, 'Arafat said: We must not forget an important thing. The invitation says that within a year the first phase of negotiations must end and the phase of self-rule [al-hukm al-dhati] must begin.

'Arafat stressed that there must be progress in the bilateral talks before the multilateral talks can begin. This is so the Israelis will not take what they want in the multilateral talks without giving what they should give in the bilateral talks.

AAPSO Statement on Palestinian Expulsions

NC0601133892 Cairo MENA in English 1206 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] Cairo Jan 6 (MENA)—The Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO) said today that the expulsion of twelve Palestinians by the Israeli authorities at this time in particular was aimed at blasting endeavours for the establishment of peace in the region and reaching a peaceful settlement of the Palestinian cause.

In a statement issued here today, the AAPSO said that this action on the part of Israel is tantamount to rejection of peace efforts and international legitimacy. "By so doing Israel wants to impose its aggression of usurpation of lands and ignore world public opinion," the statement added.

The statement further noted that the Israeli decision resulted in international protests in addition to a decision on the part of Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan to postpone the departure of their delegations to Washington to attend the new round of bilateral talks while the Palestinian delegation declared that it does not know whether or not they will attend these talks.

AAPSO appealed to UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Ghali to immediately interfere to stop the Israeli suppressive practices against Palestinian citizens in the occupied Arab lands.

It further called upon the Arab, Asian, African and world public opinion to voice their protest against those practices and against the Israeli presence in the occupied Arab territories.

The AAPSO underlined the need to adopt deterrent measures forcing Israel to abide by human rights and the international legitimacy similar to those previously adopted in the name of the new world order and a commitment to the UN resolutions.

Those practices are considered a continuation of Israel's aggressive policy that aimed at evacuating the Palestinian lands of their owners in a bid to undermine the Palestinian resistance the statement said.

Libya's al-Kharrubi Arrives With Message

NC0501164092 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1555 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Cairo, 5 Jan (MENA)—Mustafa al-Kharrubi, member of the Libyan Revolution Command Council, arrived in Cairo this evening on a few days' visit to Egypt.

In an arrival statement, al-Kharrubi said he is carrying a message from Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, to President Husni Mubarak. Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first under secretary of the Foreign Ministry and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, who received al-Kharrubi at the airport, said that the Libyan official's visit will further consolidate Egyptian-Libyan relations and inter-Arab ties. Ahmad Qadhdhaf al-Damm, coordinator of Egyptian-Libyan relations, also received al-Kharrubi at the airport.

Sidqi Delivers Government Policy Statement

NC3112095091 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1009 GMT 30 Dec 91

[""Government policy statement" delivered by Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi at the People's Assembly in Cairo on 30 December—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Mr. Speaker, brother and sister members of this venerable assembly: Peace be unto you, and season's greetings. I wish you all success in the second session of your esteemed Assembly. I wish you the best in the new year. I hope that the new year will bring more progress and prosperity to the great Egyptian people.

This government statement marks the 10th anniversary of President Muhammad Husni Mubarak's leadership, and I would like to congratulate his excellency, both personally and on behalf of the government, on the great achievements attained in the past decade. The past decade was distinguished by all standards. The decade saw various developments in the external and domestic arenas which produced positive results and raised hopes for a better future.

President Mubarak's foreign policy was characterized by a realistic approach based on consistent principles and on an adherence to peace as a means of resolving the region's problems. Egypt succeeded, through this policy, in winning the support of world countries on many issues related to its national interests. The international Middle East peace conference held last October crowned tireless efforts in which President Mubarak was involved.

The choice of Dr. Butrus Ghali as UN secretary general demonstrated an appreciation of Egypt's role in the world and an homage to Africa and the Third World.

We must recall the president's courageous stand on the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait and Egypt's military participation in repulsing and ending that aggression. Egypt's action in this matter was in line with its Arab and international commitments and in defense of legitimacy and our national interest.

Egypt's policies have gained considerable international recognition. An international consensus on granting Egypt the assistance it needs to overcome its economic crisis culminated in an agreement with the World Bank and the IMF, an agreement which underlines the basic soundness of the Egyptian economy. The agreement abolished 67 billion Egyptian pounds of Egyptian debts to creditor countries and rescheduled most of the remaining debts on easier terms.

In domestic affairs, the first steps toward political, social, and economic reform have been made during his excellency the president's term in office. Democracy has been reinforced as a method of government and a way of life. The groundwork for establishing a genuinely democratic regime has been completed and the scope of democratic practice is being widened. In addition, the government has implemented economic development and social welfare programs. The government also is committed to safeguarding national security.

As for economic development, infrastructure projects have been given high priority since the beginning of his excellency's term in office. About 69 billion Egyptian pounds were dispensed to finance massive projects,

including the renovation and completion of electricity facilities. Electricity output has increased by approximately 22 billion kilowatts per hour, an increase equal to the 1981-82 amount. Local and international telephone networks also were upgraded. The number of telephone lines increased from 510,000 to 2.3 million, an increase of almost 400 percent. The number of circuits in the Cairo international telephone exchange have increased from 160 to 3,680. A new international telephone exchange was built in Alexandria with a capacity of 1,000 circuits.

The network of roads, bridges, and tunnels also was expanded. The total length of all roads reached 17,000 km in 1991, compared with 8,365 back in 1981. We also have built 116 overpasses, tunnels, and bridges. The first stage of the Cairo subway was completed. Some 2,145 km of railway tracks were upgraded. Enormous strides were made in potable water projects, as well as in upgrading sewage networks. In addition, construction has started on 14 new cities, seven of which are already inhabited. Infrastructure projects were completed for about 1.1 million feddans [one feddan = 4,200 square meters], and more than 850,000 feddans were reclaimed. His excellency the president also championed the liberalization of the agricultural sector and ordered the lifting of many restrictions that had impeded growth.

Various economic and administrative policies also were liberalized, thereby enhancing the role of market forces in the economy. Many laws were amended to liberalize the economy and release the productive powers of the state, private, and cooperative sectors.

In his speech at the joint meeting of the People's Assembly and the Consultative Council on 15 December 1990, the president called on all government departments to prepare a 1,000-day program to liberalize the national economy. The government, in cooperation with your venerable council, prepared the executive programs to implement this national plan. Many of these programs were implemented in the past 12 months, as I will explain later.

Brother and sister members of the revered assembly, in light of the instructions contained in the speech of his excellency the president to the People's Assembly and the Consultative Council at the opening of this parliamentary session on 14 November 1991, and in keeping with the Constitution and the law, I have the honor to present you today with the government policy statement, which should be viewed as a continuation of previous government policy statements, particularly the statement delivered at your venerable assembly on 28 January 1991.

Permit me to make this statement in three parts: The first deals with the government's policies and programs in completing economic reform; the second relates to social development and justice; and the third concerns our foreign policy.

The government's policies and programs in completing economic reform:

Since the beginning of his excellency President Husni Mubarak's rule, Egypt has been taking steady and gradual steps toward economic reform. Using this method, Egypt has made important steps in relying more on market forces, encouraging private initiative, and liberalizing economic, administrative, and organizational policies. In addition, this policy has succeeded in convincing most segments of the population that economic reform is needed.

This reform is not confined to streamlining the balance of payments, balancing revenue and spending in the state's general budget, or eliminating inflation. First and foremost, it is a tool to provide the basic needs in commodities and services to all people, particularly low-income groups, at reasonable prices. It also seeks to create jobs to accommodate the constant increase in people entering the job market. I do not believe that I need to emphasize that increasing Egyptian production and productivity is the only way to reach this goal.

A great deal of investment is needed to compensate for the loss in production and to add more production potential. Experience has proven that private investment is indispensable in this area. It was only natural, then, for the government to improve the atmosphere for investment in Egypt by providing ways to gain investor confidence—whether the investor is Egyptian, Arab, or foreign—and to attract investors into establishing projects in Egypt. The components of a favorable investment atmosphere vary from one country to another. In Egypt's case, it could be said that this atmosphere is influenced by several factors, most importantly, economic and political freedom, rectifying the monetary and financial imbalances, and modernizing the rules and laws that govern investment policy-making. Thank God, we have gone a long way toward improving the investment atmosphere as part of the overall economic reform process. I am honored to present to you the most important features of what is being done in this area.

Local and international experiments conclude that development cannot be successful without the participation of the people and without the backing of the intellectuals, regardless of their partisan or doctrinal inclinations. A free person is one who is capable of being creative, inventive, and achieving prosperity for himself and his country. The state has, therefore, chosen to be democratic out of conviction and faith. The government is committed to this political philosophy and has not and will not give up democracy in its comprehensive meaning.

We attempted to adjust the monetary and financial imbalances by unifying the foreign exchange market and rates on 8 October 1991, instead of February 1992, as was scheduled, as part of the economic liberalization program. This unification followed the success of the government's policies in streamlining and stabilizing the exchange system, a process that began with the establishment of the free banking market in May 1987 and which

later expanded to combine the transactions of the consortium of banks in March 1988 and the gradual reformation of the exchange rate in the consortium of major banks as of August 1989. The exchange rate was brought closer to the rate of the free banking market in February 1991. As of May 1991, offices not connected to banks were permitted to deal in foreign banknotes, travelers checks, and free accounts for the first time.

Finally, the two foreign currency markets—the primary and free markets—were merged in October 1991. Therefore, the Egyptian economy has left the phase of multiple markets and exchange rate systems and the sudden, tremendous fluctuations in these rates. These fluctuations had adversely affected the production and investment climates. Allowing the exchange rates to be determined by supply and demand does not mean that we will ignore unjustified fluctuations. An appropriate reserve of foreign currencies has been established for the first time. The Central Bank's currency department uses this reserve to control exchange rates. A ceiling also has been set for the operating assets of banks and nonbanking units to eliminate speculation in foreign currencies. The reserve formed during the short period from February 1991 up to the present amounts to $1.44 million.

Unifying the foreign currency exchange markets and rates and determining them based on supply and demand has given the Egyptian pound its real value compared with foreign currencies and has led to the pricing of imports at their real costs. This is an incentive for exports.

As a matter of fact, overvaluing the Egyptian pound leads to the indirect subsidization of imports and to the distortion of their real costs, as if we were giving subsidies to foreign producers and increasing their ability to compete with local producers. This would be viewed as discouraging exports.

Giving the Egyptian pound its real value accords with the government's policy to rationalize imports and encourage exports to help offset the deficit in the trade and payment balances.

The experimental foreign currency exchange rate market has produced positive results. For example, the variations in exchange rates since the beginning of the year have been greatly limited. The average daily revenue of foreign currencies has risen to $17 million since the establishment of the free market—on 27 February 1991—until 23 November 1991. This is compared with a daily revenue not exceeding $8.9 million since the establishment of the free exchange rate market on 11 May 1987 up to February 1991.

It also is notable that foreign currency revenue has exceeded $1 billion in both October and November 1991, the two months after the standardization of the exchange rate and the market. Specifically, in October revenue totaled $1.016 billion and in November $1.357 billion. These figures are for the last two months following the standardization of the market and the exchange rate. We hope others will not be jealous of these results. [sentence as heard]

As for interest rates, banks were given the freedom to set fixed and variable interest rates as of 3 January 1991. While this meant freeing interest rates from any administrative, procedural, or legal restrictions, it did not mean fluctuations in the rates. A minimum limit of 12 percent was set for interest on bank deposits for a period of at least three months in order to protect small depositors. On the other hand—and this is what is important—the Central Bank every week sets the discount rate—the rate that it charges for loans to other banks when they need liquidity—through guidelines governing the interest rate on treasury bonds. These rates are set weekly according to supply and demand for these bonds in the money market—that is, the short-term money market. The freeing of lending and borrowing interest rates and their stability above the inflation rate have produced positive results, the most important of which have been proper feasibility studies of new projects and investment opportunities, the restriction of loans for consumer and property purchasing purposes, the rationalization of the stockpiling policy, encouraging investment in local currency, and changing part of the investments of Egyptian expatriates from foreign currency to the Egyptian pound.

What I want to say—if you will allow me to deviate from the text—is that we began the interest rate in January. We followed that by freeing the exchange rate. The reason is that lifting the restrictions on interest rates and giving freedom to banks to set the rate have led to an increase in local currency deposits. With the drop in the interest rate on foreign currency—particularly on the dollar, to a point much lower than in the past—the interest rate on dollar accounts is today 3.5 percent. It was much higher before. We benefited from this situation when the interest rate on the Egyptian pound rose. This made savings in Egyptian pounds more attractive and led depositors to change their foreign currency deposits into Egyptian pounds. This policy was planned and its results were known and virtually guaranteed when it was adopted. I outlined this policy to you in detail during the January 1991 government statement.

As for the effects of the increase in the interest rate on investment and production, it is noteworthy that the cost of interest on money borrowed for investment represents only a small percentage of the interest—namely, between 5 and 8 percent. The interest rate is, therefore, not the governing factor in determining the profitability of investment and production. As for the effects this could have on inflation, let me remind you that inflation in Egypt dates back to the mid-sixties. Several reasons exist for our inflation problems, some monetary and others structural. The most important of these is the relative stagnation of the productive sector, which causes an imbalance between production and consumption.

In addition, the expansion of credit and the deficit in the state's general budget, which requires more money to be

printed to partially finance it, are important factors. The government realizes that economic stability is required to create the appropriate atmosphere to achieve socio-economic development. Accordingly, we are trying to fight inflation in several ways, most importantly by accelerating productivity, particularly in the commodity sectors, and by adopting measures to restrict banking credit, particularly for the government and the public business sector. The government also wants to bring the general budget's deficit down to 7.1 percent of gross domestic product during 1991-92, as compared to 24 percent during 1987-88. The government tried to finance part of the general budget deficit by offering treasury bonds to all segments of the economy, including individuals, at interest rates to be determined according to supply and demand. This resulted in an increasing reliance on actual savings rather than printing more money to finance the deficit. The result was a decrease in inflationary pressures.

The Egyptian economy has already started to reap the fruits of economic and financial reforms. The inflation rate has decreased from last year's 25 percent to between 17 and 18 percent now. Studies and expectations indicate that it will decrease further, God willing, to 15 percent by June 1992, to 7 percent during the 1992-93 fiscal year, and to 3 percent the following year. If achieved, these results will constitute a great accomplishment.

As for the general budget deficit, the government wants to gradually narrow the gap between state revenues and spending. Here are some of the measures adopted toward that end:

Increasing the state's revenues in a gradual but steady manner. In this respect, the consumption tax was replaced by a general sales tax in May 1991. Tax revenue has grown at a considerable rate and, God willing, the rate will be maintained by expanding the tax base to include all new or concealed activities, tightening the rules for combating tax evasion, accelerating the collection of unpaid taxes, the speedy settlement of tax disputes, and creating confidence between the taxpayers and the Taxation Administration. As a matter of fact, most of you are in touch with the Taxation Administration and know of the progress made there.

The government is also modernizing the customs service by simplifying procedures, reducing exemptions, closing evasion loopholes, restructuring tariffs, and simplifying export procedures. Revenues from taxes, customs charges, and sales tax totaled 14.3 billion Egyptian pounds in 1991-92, an increase of 3 billion pounds over the previous year and 8 billion pounds over 1986-87. These revenues are expected to reach 22 billion pounds this year through improved collection procedures.

The government is also examining, in accordance with the instructions of your revered council, the introduction of a unified income tax during the 1992-93 fiscal year. The proposed tax will represent a more just way of taxing income.

As for public spending, the government is careful not to exceed the budget allocations. Controls on spending are rigorous. There has not been one incident in which expenditures have exceeded allocations, thanks to the rigorous preexpenditure controls by Finance Ministry auditors and the postexpenditure controls by the Central Auditing Agency.

The government is also eager to keep the lid on public expenditures by eliminating waste in all areas. There have been drastic cuts in official public relations costs and official automobile use.

In accordance with the policy on liberalizing the public sector, the government has separated investment in this sector from government spending. The public sector is now financed by itself and any local or foreign loans that may become available. The government has reformed the economic structure of several transportation companies to make them more competitive and eliminate the state's intervention and protection.

The government is also emphasizing the concept of public finance unity in the sense that all government revenues and expenditures should appear on one balance sheet.

By late 1990, approximately $13.3 billion worth of foreign debts, including debts to Gulf countries, the Gulf Development Agency, and military debts to the United States, were canceled. Egypt reduced its foreign debts by 50 percent by signing a Paris Club agreement on 15 May 1991. The agreement calls for the cancellation of 15 percent of Egyptian debts on 1 July 1991, 15 percent on 1 March 1993, and 20 percent on 1 July 1994. This really means that Egyptian debts are to be reduced by a total of $7 billion, which will help ease the pressure on the public budget and balance of payment and help stimulate the economy.

Additionally, during the consultative group meetings on Egypt in Paris in July, all the creditor states promised to continue their bilateral aid programs. The U.S. aid program will also provide greater flexibility for financing and implementation. This is in addition to the loans and grants which Arab funds and states will extend. We are currently preparing a detailed list of the national projects for which we could secure financing from Arab funds and friendly states. It is noteworthy that the government is committed not to borrow money except when necessary to finance productive projects the return from which would allow repayment of the loans and interest.

We also want to improve the competitive capability of the private sector in the investment field. The private sector made investments totaling more than 20 billion Egyptian pounds during the first four years of the current five-year plan. It contributed effectively in establishing industrial projects in new cities and in land reclamation and cultivation. It has also contributed a great deal in the tourism sector. Nevertheless, the investment potential of this sector is much greater than that when you compare it to the size of its savings during the same period. The government is seeking to move these savings into investment projects. The following are only some of the

measures we have taken in this regard: Allowing the private sector to invest freely in all fields except for a limited number of companies mentioned in a list that was announced last June. This list will be reviewed annually. This means that the private sector now has unlimited investment opportunities in all sectors.

The government is also encouraging the private sector to invest part of its financial, organizational, and administrative resources to buy or manage public sector projects owned by the government, the governorates, or the public sector as long as it benefits the economy. Some 1,673 projects, which were owned by the governorates, have been transferred to the private sector or the cooperative sector. These projects are mostly small in size. For example, some 53 projects with a book value of more than 100,000 Egyptian pounds each have also been disposed of. Only 192 governorate projects remain. These 192 have been divided into seven groups according to their activity. These are currently being disposed of through sale or rental. The national and foreign private sector has been given the task of managing or renting some of the hotels belonging to the public sector companies. It has also been decided to sell the government and public sector shares in some companies. Banks and insurance companies, which must change the structure of their financial portfolio, are immune from this decision.

The law on the public sector's business companies contained provisions designed to encourage the private sector to become shareholders in these companies.

We also want to liberate the public sector and correct the situation of companies that are failing. Everyone agrees that public investment is needed to achieve the highest possible yield to support the state budget and employees working in public companies. This is why your honorable assembly approved the public business sector law in June 1991 the executive schedule of which was issued in November. In implementation of the law's provisions, the government began adopting measures necessary to rectify the situation of the public sector companies. The government places special significance on ending this task as soon as possible so the companies can be regulated by law. The government also began forming general assemblies for holding companies in preparation for the formation of boards of directors. These are shareholder companies totally owned by the state and other public corporations. The holding company owns at least 51 percent of its capital alone or in partnership with other public corporations. The purpose of establishing holding companies is not to interfere in the management of subsidiary companies but to assist them and coordinate with them to solve their problems. The holding companies have a right to manage their financial portfolios to enable them to mobilize funds to establish new projects and create new employment opportunities for the youth.

God willing, in the coming stage we will see concrete changes in the management of public investments. They will be managed just as successful private investments are managed. The law gave the management of subsidiary companies freedom and authority to secure the necessary investments to finance the improvement and modernization of production systems. The management is free to diversify and develop products according to the market, leading to an increase in production and added value for the company.

In implementation of the principle of responsibility, the three-year term of the chairman and members of the board of directors of a company will not be renewed if the company does not reach the targets set in its annual plan.

To complete the economic reform steps, the government is currently studying ways to unify laws governing economic activity, particularly Law 159 of 1981 concerning fund managing companies, investment Law 230 of 1989, and Law 203 of 1991 concerning the public business sector companies. We are doing this to make the same rules apply to all public and private investments. This unified law will help create a sound legislative atmosphere for investments and will encourage and attract national, Arab, and foreign capital investment in Egypt.

In order to liberalize the economy, a suitable guidance plan for the private and public business sectors, taking into account the market and the structure of investment and output, is needed. In addition, a binding plan for the administrative apparatus, the central government, local administrations, and the utility services are also required. This should be done keeping in mind the changed role of the public sector. The latter, after its renovation, will have autonomous resources that will enable it to take control of its investment and production decisions.

Activating the stock market is an urgent issue. We need to modernize the stock market so the private and public-sector companies can finance their operations. The government is currently cooperating with experts to formulate a program for renovating the market. Herewith the most salient features of this program:

Comprehensive legislation to organize the stock market is needed. That legislation should renovate stock market regulations so as to stimulate trade in financial stocks. It must include a clear definition of the functions of the General Stock Market Authority particularly with regard to enhancing its role in proposing legislation. This legislation should encourage the establishment of various financial institutions and mediators such as financial companies, fund managing companies, and dealers in money market futures. Efforts should also be made to diversify the structure of stocks available in the market.

The banking system also needs to be renovated. The banking system, as you may know, plays a vital role in economic life because it regulates the monetary flow among various economic units. Over the past few years, major developments have occurred in our banking system.

For example, the total bank deposits in Egyptian pounds totaled 40.8 billion on 30 June 1991, as compared with 34.3 billion Egyptian pounds on 30 June 1990. The share

of household deposits in that total rose from 17.8 to 22.4 billion Egyptian pounds during the same period.

The total bank deposits in foreign currencies were $30.7 billion on 30 June 1991, as compared to $14.1 billion on 30 June 1990. The share of household—as opposed to corporate—deposits rose from $8.3 billion to $10 billion in the same period.

The total of bank credit in local and foreign currencies reached 82.4 billion Egyptian pounds on 30 June 1991, as compared with 55.3 billion pounds on 30 June 1990. The share of household credit rose from 25.7 billion Egyptian pounds to 30 billion pounds in the same period.

If a bank's performance and society's confidence in the banking system and in economic stability can be measured by the size and growth of deposits—and by banking contributions in financing various activities, especially investment activity—the figures I have quoted here are significant.

Because banks are important and play a vital role in our society, they will always be the subject of attention and scrutiny. Their performance must be consistent with world developments and with the requirements of transactions in external markets according to certain criteria and bases. From this premise, the systems and bases of work are always being revised, including ensuring that capital commensurate with the size of their activity according to international standards is available.

Last year a law was issued on the secrecy of accounts and account numbers. A number of new rules were implemented to strengthen the financial status of banks, such as obligating them to keep some of their assets in foreign currency.

God willing, during this session the government will submit a bill containing important amendments to the banking system and credit laws in accordance with modern methods pursued by other states.

In keeping with the economic reform process, we need to encourage youth to own small industries and projects. As we know, the unemployment problem tops the list of the issues to which the government pays special attention. Unemployment affects the future of millions of Egyptians. Its continuation represents a squandering of an important resource in our society. It is only natural then to provide work opportunities for youth and to make it one of the main aims of the economic reform and liberalization program. One of the programs the government started to help with this problem was forming the social fund in February 1991, in cooperation with international financing agencies, especially the World Bank and friendly states. The general budget will also place funds in this social fund. The amount of money available to date is some $590 million. The fund aims to create work opportunities for youth, including those returning because of the Gulf crisis, through a program of soft loans to finance small projects and through training and providing employment opportunities on various production and industrial projects. The coming phase requires full coordination between the fund and all the executive and scientific departments to help the youth choose the projects which benefit them and society at the same time. We will try to benefit from the experience of states which are more developed than us in the field, such as China and Korea, and before them the Latin American states and Japan.

The government feels strongly about the importance of small crafts and industries, production cooperatives, and cottage industries in providing new work opportunities for youth. It has, therefore, asked research departments to begin detailed studies of these industries in Egypt, their geographical distribution and prospects for their expansion and development.

When these studies are completed, Egypt, God willing, will have its first comprehensive map of small industries and their prospects for the future.

The Ministry of Local Administration has prepared a national plan to spread small industries in the governorates. This plan—which aims to create 70,000 jobs over four years by creating new industrial units, expanding existing units, providing raw materials and production tools, and helping market products—has been submitted to the social fund for further study. In addition, we have programs in place now, such as technical training in industrial workshops, the governorates' training centers, and the industrial secondary schools. Priority will be given to the activities and projects for which local raw materials are available and which are connected with fulfilling essential needs or which could be exported abroad.

The banking system is supporting the establishment of small industries in various fields by providing easy terms on loans.

Cottage industries have proved to be a great success not only on the local level but on the international level as well. A program financed by the social fund has been prepared to support these industries, to provide them necessary credit facilities, and to facilitate the exhibition of their products in fairs at home and abroad.

We are working to strengthen and maintain foreign trade in our economic reform efforts. As part of the comprehensive economic liberalization and reform program, new regulations for exports and imports were issued in May 1991. These regulations help liberate foreign trade tremendously. They contain a gradual liberalization of goods the import of which are banned and will control imports through custom tariffs and exchange rates. The regulations also simplify import and export procedures and gradually decrease the role of government agencies in issuing import-export licenses. The regulations remove restrictions on the import of raw materials, production tools, semi-manufactured products, machines, and spare parts. Each restriction costs money and its removal reduces the cost of production and increases the chances of production.

The government seeks complete equality between the public and private sectors and provides equal opportunities in the field of foreign trade. This includes allowing the private sector to conclude barter deals, which happened for the first time last year.

Transactions with the outside world have resulted in the current account balance registering a surplus of $2.2 billion in 1990-91, compared with a deficit of $60.4 million in 1989-90. This is the first time in 20 years we have had a surplus in the account balance.

This important development is due to the fact that Egypt has paid $340 million less for imports now that Egyptian products are replaced some imported goods, that visible and invisible exports have increased by $1.6 billion, and that current transfers have increased by $881 million. This has led to the current surplus.

Revenues from tourism totaled $924 million in 1990-91, compared with $1.07 billion last year, a decrease of 12 or 13 percent due to the Gulf crisis.

The government is studying the idea of freeing the cotton market, reopening the Mina al-Basal bourse, and, gradually, completely liberating the cotton trade. God willing, this will take place very soon in cooperation with the departments concerned.

Egypt has participated in drafting plans to liberate international trade through its negotiations and serious and constant presence in the GATT negotiations, in the South-South dialogue, the South-North dialogue, and discussions with friendly states.

I will now, with your permission, move to the second part of the statement: Social development and justice.

Egypt, which believes in its sons' ability to wage the battles of development and reconstruction and to create a better future, also believes that in order to achieve this, a good educational and cultural system, sufficient health care, healthy housing units, and other basic services are needed. The government, therefore, pays attention to social development just as it does economic development.

Allow me to remind you of the population problem. The government realizes that the current population growth rate is a problem that threatens society because it eats up a great part of the surplus from economic growth and raises the average aid given to families. This adversely affects everyone's standard of living. The government has, therefore, allowed family planning services to go to small towns and the countryside and has provided all kinds of planning in health centers in the governorates and villages and other outlets at minimal prices. These efforts have been rewarded by the improvement in some population indicators. The annual population growth rate reached 30.4 per thousand in 1985 and has decreased to 24.7 per thousand in 1990-91, a reduction of about 2.4 percent. We hope that with our intense efforts the rate will be reduced to a reasonable level soon.

In addition, we want to resettle citizens in newly constructed urban societies and modern cities to alleviate the burden of heavily populated areas. We have already built seven of these modern cities and are planning to build seven more. These cities will be able to accommodate some 6 million people.

The government believes that when one talks about education and teaching, one is actually talking about life and the future. Making the future and confronting it starts with the educated person armed with knowledge, education, and experience. Despite government efforts and achievements in the field of education, our society needs to continue this march so that our education institutions can provide youth with multi-faceted learning and experience to fit the worldwide information revolution. We also need to replace indoctrination and rote-learning with understanding and analysis.

The government is always working on developing educational programs and plans in the various educational stages to deal with contemporary problems and modern scientific and technological achievements. In the field of elementary education, interest has increased in the sciences of the future—mathematics, sciences, and languages—and in modern methods of education, such as computers and audio-visual equipment. Teaching principles of technical and technological education in basic elementary education is important as well.

In the field of general secondary education, some basic topics have been introduced to prepare students for practical life along with their scientific preparation. In addition, the elective system has been introduced. The curriculum of the technical secondary education system, therefore, is being constantly developed. We have contacts with some foreign countries, topped by Germany, Japan, Spain, and Cyprus, to strengthen our education system so it can be competitive with contemporary technological and scientific education and produce qualified people. Agreements have also been reached with some production institutions to set up technical colleges by using these companies' experiences and workshops to train students.

For some time now, a continuous review of textbooks has been carried out to weed out wordiness, repetition, and long-windedness. These tendencies damage the students performance. The government is also paying great attention to raising the educational level of schools by keeping abreast of new developments in field of specialization and introducing incentives for outstanding teachers. So far this year, 127 million Egyptian pounds has been allocated to improve the material and scientific standards of teachers.

University curricula are being designed to develop students' scientific thinking and creative abilities. Some colleges are moving toward introducing an educational system of electives and credit hours. During the past few years, however, interest has increased in higher studies and linking scientific research at universities with development requirements,

social services, and environmental protection. Recently, the system of open education was applied, enabling many to continue their education and serve the interests of comprehensive growth.

In the coming stage, the objective is to build the necessary schools to accomodate all children at the compulsory education level, decrease the number of students per classroom to a reasonable level, eliminate the shift system, which, in some schools, goes up to three shifts a day, and expand social, sports, and artistic activities. Other objectives are to continue exercising control on and demanding commitment from teachers and students alike, and prolonging the scholastic year to meet international standards.

The development of syllabi and educational methods is a continuous process that considers local and international changes, the most important of which is the information revolution, scientific and technological progress, the winds of democracy and human rights, discoveries in telecommunications, and the need to balance foreign and international influences with national and pan- Arab considerations.

Because culture is firmly linked to comprehensive growth, the government is radically developing cultural activities. Culture is a major factor in disciplining social and political behavior by entrenching values stemming from religious, historic, artistic, and political education. These goals are finding practical echoes in various projects by cultural organizations, which you hear about and are opened practically daily, such as museums, theaters, cinemas, or otherwise.

Scientific research institutes, bodies, and colleges are no longer merely playing a service role. Theirs has become a role of productive investment due to their close links to the development plan's feasibility studies, of proposing appropriate solutions to its problems, of carrying out research on how to increase agricultural and industrial production and productivity—substituting imported raw materials with local ones wherever possible—of adapting imported technologies, and of creating local technologies. To encourage trained human resources to work in scientific research, 1,000 top graduates have been assigned to work in research centers and institutes, apart from the scholarships they receive.

I will now discuss housing and public utilities. As we are all aware, the government gives particular attention to the housing issue on the grounds that a hygienic house is an economic and social necessity and is a basic factor in a (?fair) society.

The 1987-1992 five-year plan targeted the construction and completion of approximately one million housing units in urban and rural areas, instructing the Housing and Construction Ministry to implement 40 percent of these units through its housing departments in the governorates, the housing and construction companies, and the cooperative construction and housing societies. The plan called on the private sector to implement the rest. Housing and Construction Ministry departments have invited tenders and contracted the construction of approximately 415,000 housing units in the first four years of the plan. Approximately 161,000 units have been implemented and 254,000 units are now being implemented, taking into consideration that the implementation periods vary between 18 and 30 months.

The private sector has faced some obstacles that could lead to a deficiency in the implementation of its plan. This sector implemented approximately 385,000 units from 1987 to 1990.

Despite the fact that public utilities require efforts that exceed capabilities, we will spare no effort to expand in this area in the coming phase.

Regarding the health services, great achievements have been made in the field of preventive medicine involving all ages. Over 85 percent of all children have been immunized against the six common fatal diseases. This has had a tangible effect in reducing the number of those afflicted by these diseases. Some of these diseases have almost been eliminated. No cholera cases appeared for the fifth consecutive year.

In the field of health care, the problem of endemic diseases was confronted in a new spirit and with concentrated efforts that have helped reduce the Schistosomiasis rate from 23 percent in 1986-1987 to 9.6 percent in 1990-1991. From 1986-1987 to 1990 [as heard] the number of central state hospitals increased from 186 to 200. Rural village [clinical] units increased from 60 to 97. The number of beds in the Health Ministry's various hospitals in urban and rural areas increased from 59,000 to 64,000. In health insurance hospitals, the number of beds increased from 3,600 to 5,000. In the hospitals of the treatment institution [al- mu'assasah al-'ilajiyah], the number of beds increased from 3,100 to 5,000. In the coming phase, the government aims to reduce the infant mortality rate by intensifying campaigns for periodic immunization against infantile diseases and by introducing a new kind of immunization against Hepatitis B, which is the most serious of liver inflamation diseases.

In the field of medical treatment, the government constantly seeks to build new treatment centers and introduce a socially equitable, popular participation program that will allow patients to pay nominal medical fees. The program will guarantee a high level of medical treatment and free hospital beds for those who are able to pay and for those who are not.

I will now discuss information and communications policy.

Egyptian information policy rests on two principles. The first is connected with the substance of the information message and the second involves the comprehensive and integrated modernization of the media and means of telecommunications. Regarding the first principle, the government seeks to emphasize and safeguard the liberty of the people and inspire in them a spirit of belonging and a work and production ethic. This is done by exhorting the people

to increase production and tackle economic development issues, enhance productivity, and combat illiteracy, illegal drugs, terrorism, and perversion. The government also encourages creative social and economic initiatives that enlighten the citizen about his identity, culture, and the causes of his homeland and his Arab and Islamic nation. These objectives are reflected in the material disseminated by the various media.

Regarding the second principle, the government has sought to modernize equipment, stations, television and radio broadcasting studios, and all other technical resources. The most modern and appropriate equipment that technology and electronics can offer is already in service. This has raised the level of the Egyptian media to that of the developed countries.

In view of the immense flow of foreign programs carried over dozens of international and regional satellites that are becoming increasingly easy to receive with modern equipment, the issue of cultural invasion has been raised. This is represented by programs that do not suit the Egyptian people. The government has paid appropriate attention to this issue and has accorded it a proper place in its information plans. This invasion is being confronted by consolidating religious and cultural values, stressing Arabic language studies, promoting greater understanding of our nation's attributes and heritage, and offering a broad spectrum of broadcasts on several networks. The current rich flow of quality Egyptian broadcasting emphasizes our commitment to our creed and values, as well as acting as a protective shield.

The government has also sought to provide proper care for children and youths and to create a social climate that gives the Egyptian individual a feeling of security about his and his children's life and future.

In the field of child and mother care, the National Childhood and Motherhood Council was established and instructed to create a permanent and stable policy for child and mother care. The president's wife has supervised numerous programs aimed to give the Egyptian child a fair share of varied cultural activities and to provide places for sports and hobby activities, particularly in areas which previously lacked them.

In the field of youth care, the government provides religious cultural activity for these youths. It has built public libraries and religious institutes in the governorates and villages. Al-Azhar scholars have been carrying out enlightenment campaigns among the youths in various areas of the governorate, even remote ones.

Now we move to the issue of insurance services and social care. The state guarantees social care for workers and pensioners and old age, disability, and death insurance benefits. By 30 June 1991, 14.4 million citizens had already been included in insurance plans. The pensions and insurance benefits paid out in 1990-91 amounted to 3.2 billion pounds compared with 2.6 billion pounds the previous year. Approximately 5.4 million citizens received such benefits.

In the sphere of child and mother social care, the government built new nurseries, child clubs, libraries, gardens, and children's homes. About half a million children benefited from these efforts.

In the field of social rehabilitation, about 60,000 persons benefited from the services offered by social rehabilitation centers, cultural institutions, and physiotherapy centers.

There are currently 200,000 productive families who practice various industries. Their products were exhibited at several fairs held at home and abroad.

In pursuance of the same policy, emphasizing the importance of extending services to low-salaried individuals and providing greater social justice, and in line with the government's understanding that raising the people's standard of living is the chief goal of economic development efforts, an actual improvement in the salaries of the poor is being sought. Ultimately, the real meaning of the concept of social justice is to enable these people to obtain basic commodities at reasonable prices. The government is doing its utmost to protect these classes and ease their burdens.

Among the most important policies that the government is pursuing in this sphere is to guarantee educational democracy. The government has adopted many executive measures to guarantee equal educational opportunities. Basic education has been extended up to the final grades of preparatory schools. By the end of 1990-91, 97.6 percent of all children had been absorbed in the school system and 100 percent of the children who successfully completed elementary school were absorbed in preparatory schools. About 89 percent of those who passed the preparatory school certificate were accomodated in secondary schools. All loopholes violating the principle of equal opportunity for university education have been closed. Additionally, schools have been renovated and new wings have been built, particularly in provincial areas.

Furthermore, the government adopted plans for model low-cost housing to provide homes for low-salaried people. Tenders were awarded for building such low-cost housing in 1987-88. The first such houses appeared in 1989-90 when 41,300 units were built, representing 77 percent of all housing units built by Housing Ministry agencies. In 1990-91, the number of completed housing units rose to 51,100, representing 84.9 percent of all housing.

Also, the loans that have been provided by the Central Bank during the year 1990-1991 totaled 615 million pounds, of which 588 million pounds have been utilized, with low-cost housing benefiting by approximately 95 percent of this amount. As you are aware, the government has decided not to increase the determined installments for the housing units. Easy-term loans were obtained by those who received these units in comparison with the contracts that were concluded before 3 January 1991. In the period from 3 January 1991 to 30 June 1992, according to the plan we are implementing, the owners of the houses will pay only six percent interest

while the state treasury will bear the difference. The person benefiting from the loan will bear the set interest rate. It has also been decided to reduce the interest paid to the banks operating in this field to one percent only to cover the expenses of managing the loans. This is in addition to providing medical treatment to those with limited income. The number of free beds in Health Ministry hospitals increased to 60,700 of which approximately 24,000 beds are in state and central hospitals and 36,000 beds are in other hospitals, like the school health, trachoma, psychiatric, chest, fevers, leprosy, and other hospitals. These services are being expanded. Perhaps, you are aware that the annual cost of maintaining a free bed is approximately 800 pounds this year; the cost was 600 pounds in 1987. This means that there has been an improvement in the service. There are many other details which we will discuss later.

In concluding this part concerning social development, allow me to say that, regarding the medicines, your August assembly had a part in... [commotion in the assembly interrupts Sidqi] It is you who called for increasing the prices. [commotion persists, the speaker says that this matter will be debated later and adds: We are now in the process of the presentation of the statement. Prime Minister Sidqi then continues]

There remains a final point in this regard. It is related to national security and justice. The government is aware that protecting national security is our primary task during the peace Egypt has achieved. This security must be protected and consolidated by Armed Forces that are capable of efficiently shouldering their responsibilities. Therefore, the building of a strong and developed national army is a necessity and a demand that cannot be relinquished and there must be no wavering in achieving it. This conforms with the desire for peace that the Egyptian people have taken upon themselves as a way to achieve their goals.

On this occasion, the government puts on record its pride in and appreciation of the Armed Forces for their sincere efforts to ensure the homeland's security and for their honorable role in the Gulf war. [applause].

The government realizes that democracy and development cannot prosper unless the state's authority is stable and internal security is ensured. Therefore, the government does not hesitate in bolstering the police forces with all the capabilities that will enable them to carry out their duty in the manner required by the current circumstances. The government puts on record its appreciation of the police forces' efforts in combating all forms of terrorism and confronting all violations of the legitimacy, whatever the source. It also appreciates the police forces' continuous efforts to develop the service in the various areas and use scientific methods in combating crime. [applause]

In the field of justice, the government has followed a judicial policy whose objective is to bolster the independence of the judiciary, simplify the judicial system, facilitate its measures, and put an end to its problems so that litigants can have confidence in the system and citizens can feel at ease. Some elements of this judicial policy are to meet the demand for more men in the judiciary, gather the legal principles entrenched by our supreme courts, and provide them in stages to all courts, prosecutors' offices, and judicial bodies. Modernization of the judicial services continues with the introduction of microfilms to preserve documents and cases and the providing of photocopying facilities for legal documents, in addition to the expansion and development of court houses and buildings. Around 30 court complexes are now being built which, God willing, will be opened during the next two years.

Since 1987, the government has initiated a revision of all laws in the country with the objective of unifying and simplifying them. To realize this, the government has gathered, documented, and indexed all applicable Egyptian laws. So far, they amount to 59,000 major and subsidiary laws. In 1988, a higher committee for legislation was formed at the Justice Ministry to study the proposals it receives from numerous sides on developing laws to go along with contemporary economic and social changes and prepare to take legislative measures on them. The Justice Ministry has also formed committees for revising the basic laws. Numerous laws have been proposed and your esteemed assembly has approved them. The civil and economic code of procedures has been amended and is currently before you for discussion.

The Justice Ministry has almost finished preparing a number of draft laws on the new trade law, an amendment of the law on criminal proceedings, an amendment of the law on legal records, the economic law on special international deals, and a special law on issuing and trading with checks. The government is also considering drafts for amending laws on local administration, the banking system, the financial capital market, as I have already mentioned, and other economic legislations. We will present them to you during this round, God willing.

Let us move now to the last section of the government policy statement, the one about foreign policy. Egyptian foreign policy is based on clear, unambiguous, and consistent principles. These principles do not change as we go along, for they are based primarily on ethical values. Our foreign policy is one of moderation and realism. This has gained us credibility on the regional and international scene.

The Arab League has returned to its headquarters in Cairo. Dr. 'Ahmad 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has been unanimously elected as Arab League secretary general. As I said earlier, Dr. Butrus Ghali was unanimously elected UN secretary general.

Egypt, through relentless and sincere efforts, has succeeded in persuading all the regional and international parties to hold the peace conference in Madrid on resolving the Middle East issue. This was one of the most important events in the last decade of this century,

actually in the past few decades. All sides sat together at the negotiations table and talked face to face. The representatives of the brotherly Palestinian people took part, on equal footing, presented their cause, and called on the international community to shoulder its responsibility in resolving it [the Middle East crisis] in accordance with law, international conventions, and the right to self-determination.

Egypt has played a high-profile role on the regional and international scenes to turn that conference from a dream into a reality. Egypt has removed obstacles, one by one, through quiet dialogue and sober reasoning. It employed the store of confidence and the relations of amity that it has with all sides and utilized the appreciation it enjoys with all parties, including the United States and the former Soviet Union, in this quest.

The second phase of the peace conference has begun, and Egypt will use all its resources and potential to ensure its success and move it forward, God willing.

In its speech at the Madrid conference, Egypt made it clear that the Arab sides have not gone to the conference to squander any of their rights, but to obtain all these rights in accordance with the principles of exchanging land for peace and the inadmissibility of seizing land by force, as well as in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

Brother and sister members of the venerable assembly, the story of our achievements in foreign policy since your last session in January 1991 up to now has been a long one, of which I will present you only a brief outline.

Concerning the Gulf crisis, which was at its peak last January, a vicious aggression has been repulsed. It was an aggression that aimed at annihilating the existence of an independent and sovereign state and its annexation to Iraq as the 19th governorate. This was a bizarre and sorry epic that took us by surprise when it began on 2 August 1991. The Iraqi regime tried to present us with a fait accompli and an irreversible situation. Egypt, together with other friendly Arab and Islamic countries, had only one recourse: to face that matter with the necessary firmness and resolve. As much as we may loathe fighting among brothers, we had to do what was necessary. We had to fight for what is right and against what is evil. Praise be to God, the aggression was terminated and the invading army was expelled from Kuwait. Kuwait restored its land, sovereignty, and independence and righteousness won the day.

Furthermore, in his speech to the European Parliament in November, the president delivered a statement on Egypt's concerns in the coming stage. As you know, the statement outlined these concerns as follows:

His excellency asserted that meeting the needs of economic development in Third World countries, including Egypt, must be one of the chief challenges facing the world at this time on the grounds that democracy and economic development are inseparable and that it is difficult to visualize real democracy without providing high standards of education, health, and social services.

He noted that the aid extended to developing nations is markedly below the required level and called on the industrially advanced countries to reduce their annual armament budgets by 10 percent and allocate the sums thus saved to promote economic development in Third World countries. He also called for lifting trade barriers currently erected against imports from developing countries and for encouraging the transfer of technology to improve productivity in those countries.

These requirements were expressed in the president's statement. Actually, they represent an important basis for future action by developing countries, including Egypt.

European countries also were urged to pay attention to resolving the Third World's debt problem, which weighs down and restricts the activity of developing countries.

The president also called on European countries to reemphasize their support for his excellency's initiative to turn the Middle East into a region free of weapons of mass destruction. He urged the formation of a club comprising all European and Middle East countries that would be a focus for meetings and discussions among officials and other figures, including professionals and intellectuals.

Brothers and sisters, members of this venerable assembly: Our foreign policy approach has continued to be governed by the requirements of peace and the challenge of economic development. In this framework, we worked with the fraternal Arab countries, African countries, countries of the Nonaligned Movement, developing nations, the members of the Islamic Conference Organization, the two superpowers—the United States and the USSR at that time—the EC, and other friendly countries, particularly China and Japan.

As I have already said, the return of the Arab League to its permanent Cairo headquarters was one of the most prominent events on the Arab scene this year.

Furthermore, our concern with enabling the Nonaligned Movement to maintain an effective international role and keep abreast of international changes and developments made us propose that this movement close ranks and unite its efforts with that group of developing countries, known as the Group of 77, in order to achieve the desired inter-coordination among the developing countries of the South and also to bolster dialogue and cooperation with the advanced countries of the North in a way benefiting all parties.

Egypt's efforts, alongside those of the fraternal African countries in combating the hated apartheid policy, bore fruit and brought us closer to the desired goal of eliminating this mark of disgrace. We are satisfied with the positive developments in this issue. God willing, we will further our efforts on the African scene and within the framework of the United Nations and the Nonaligned Movement until this major obstacle is removed so our

African societies and countries may devote themselves to construction and development.

Our relations with the United States, which are based on mutual respect and joint interests, have been consolidated. The past year saw intensive contacts between Egypt and the United States and joint efforts by both countries to establish peace based on justice and rejecting aggression. We appreciate the U.S. Administration's efforts in confronting the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait and in stimulating the Middle East peace process. We hope these efforts will continue to be successful.

Our bilateral ties with the United States are also flourishing. I would like to pay tribute to the U.S. initiative to cancel Egypt's military debts and assist Egypt in alleviating and rescheduling its external debts.

Eastern Europe probably saw this year's most sweeping changes. We have followed developments there with interest and friendship and we wish these nations stability and prosperity. The events in Eastern Europe have affected our economic interests there and elsewhere.

We have closely followed the fast-breaking events in the Soviet Union, which culminated in momentous changes in the last few days, leading to the formation of a new commonwealth. We hope to preserve the same bonds and relations with the newly independent states of the commonwealth that we had with the Soviet Union, so we have officially recognized them. We are pursuing contacts to establish official and diplomatic ties with them and will continue our contacts with their leaders to strengthen our friendship and cooperation in various political, economic, technical, commercial, and cultural areas.

The government has begun to send Egyptian delegations to examine the markets of these republics with a view to boosting our exports. We will seek to sign equal trade agreements with them on either individual or collective bases. We will also seek to draw on the expertise of various republics in vital sectors of the Egyptian infrastructure, such as electricity, sewage, desalination, and subways, in return for Egyptian exports. We will encourage these republics to assist in the renovation and replacement plans of Egyptian factories and to export spare parts in return for Egyptian exports. We will also encourage Egyptian businessmen and the private sector and education, culture, and scientific research bodies to contact companies, institutes, and organizations in the former Soviet republics to preserve the fruitful relations we had with them for so many years. We will seek to create new opportunities for boosting our ties with these republics in a way that serves our mutual interests and is compatible with the course of events in that vital part of the world.

Brothers and sisters, members of the esteemed People's Assembly: One of Egypt's priority concerns is caring for the Egyptian communities abroad. They are our sons and our responsibility toward them transcends the borders of the homeland and covers all of them wherever they are. Egyptian expatriates are entitled to rights and we will willingly address their rights. They are accomplishing a duty that we must not underestimate. Their concerns and problems will receive due attention from the government and we need not give examples. I will, however, note that the government pooled all of its resources to facilitate the return of those expatriates who wished to do so during the Gulf crisis and provided them with various forms of facilities. This was not too much for them, because it is our duty to make every Egyptian abroad feel that he is in a position of esteem, attention, and care under all circumstances.

Speaker of the People's Assembly, brothers and sisters, members of the People's Assembly: In this statement, I briefly mentioned the most important foundations of the economic action that the government adopts at present to increase production. The economic reforms programs are comprehensive, integrated, and coordinated. The economic reforms programs are initiated by Egypt and are closely linked to the circumstances of Egyptian society. They are the outcome of a careful study and effective participation by the government and the political and popular establishments while taking into account the social aspects of any economic policy so that the burden of reform will be kept at a minimum level to limited-income citizens.

We praise God for the security and stability in which we live while we witness the disturbances and crises that are sweeping European and other countries, disturbances that are linked to political and economic transformations in these countries. Needless to say, the most important factors that helped us achieve this positive situation is the gradual implementation of the economic reform program. At the end of this statement, I would like to note the positive developments in the increase in production in the past four years of the second five-year development plan. The sum total of local production at fixed prices increased from approximately 74.2 billion Egyptian pounds in 1986-87 to approximately 91 billion pounds in 1990-91, an increase of 22.6 percent and an average annual growth rate of 5.2 percent. This rate approaches double the average annual growth of the population. The production of commodities increased by 5.3 percent annually compared to 5.2 percent of production services, and 5 percent for social services. A tangible development occurred in the production of commodities. In the field of agriculture, grain production increased from 9,315 tons in 1986-87 to 13,679 in 1990-91, an increase of 46.8 percent. The increase was due to an increase in wheat production at 65.8 percent, rice at 48.8 percent, maize at 62.1 percent. The production of legumes increased during the same period by 17 percent, sugar cane at 16.4 percent, sugar beet at 12.6 percent, fruit at 18.2 percent. The cotton crop suffered some difficulties. The competent departments at the agriculture ministry addressed these problems, making a relative improvement in the production in the past year. Red meat production increased by 47.6 percent, poultry production by 14.6 percent, fish by 47.3 percent.

In the industrial sector, the output increased during the same period by 50-96 percent for some products—like ready made clothes, buses, reinforced steel, caustic soda, water meters, cement, and electric bulbs. The output of some products increased at a rate of 21-39 percent—like fodder, electric washing machines, phosphate, electric meters, blankets, and tires. The output of phosphate-based fertilizers increased by 15 percent, while azotic-based fertilizers increased by 5 percent.

In the petroleum sector, approximately 80 new finds have been made since 1986-87. Accordingly, the Egyptian oil reserve was increased to 6 billion barrels by the end of 1990-91 in contrast to 5.1 in 1986-87. The Egyptian oil output increased to 45 million tons in contrast to 43 million tons. Gas and gas byproducts increased from 5.4 million tons to 8.2 million tons during the same period. Oil exports revenues amounted to $2.535 billion during 1990-91, while imports amounted to $953 million during the same period, with a surplus estimated at $1.582 billion.

In the field of electricity, the amount of generated electricity increased from 35.2 billion kilowatt/hour at the end of 1986-87 to 43.6 billion kilowatt/hour in 1990-91, registering a 23.9 percent increase. In 1990-91, electricity networks were consolidated and renovated in 918 villages, in addition to the enhancement of city networks. The electric current was supplied to approximately 700,000 new subscribers.

As for the coming stage, the government started preparations for the third five-year plan, which covers the years 1992-97, over a year ago. This plan will be compatible with the new economic order in the establishment of which we have already taken giant steps. Several aspects of the Egyptian national economy have been liberated by depending on market forces in managing economic activity. The government has sought the advice of some experts and economists. Expanded meetings were held with the groups in charge of both the public and private sectors to explore the various views. The opportunity is still favorable for all the executive, legislative, and party organs as well as research centers, trade unions, businessmen, industrial syndicates, scientists, and others to contribute their proposals to this plan. The government particularly welcomes the assistance of the memebers of your esteemed assembly in this connection, until we can develop a national plan which reflects the views of the society with all its sects, and refer it to the esteemed assembly in early May, God willing. The years of this plan are expected to witness a tangible increase in the growth rate of commodity output, particularly in the field of conversion industries and agriculture, in view of several considerations. The most important of these considerations are the government's tendencies to seek the optimal use of the positive effects of expanded investment in the infrastructure field in the past 10 years, expanded private investment, together with the constant improvement in the Egyptian investment atmosphere, the increased output of the public sector after developing it and liberating its leadership, and the projected liberation of the agricultural sector of all restrictions, God willing.

The growing commodity output will naturally improve the situation of the public budget and the balance of payment, as well as help slow down inflation rates and create sufficient job opportunities for young people.

Before I conclude my statement, I would like to express appreciation to your esteemed assembly for your full cooperation with the government and its active participation in formulating the socioeconomic reform programs. We are confident that you will continue to cooperate, because no matter how much effort the government makes, it cannot unilaterally undertake the burden of national action without your participation and backing. We are all partners in shouldering the responsibility and seeking the same goal. May the Almighty guide us all to what benefits Egypt. May God's peace and mercy be upon you.

*Poverty Statistics Pitch for Financial Aid

92P40091A Cairo AL-HAQIQAH in Arabic
7 Dec 91 p 1

[Text] A seminar convened last week by the Institute of National Planning has asserted that 47 percent of Egypt's population lives under the poverty line because of increased prices, fixed wages, and the deteriorating standard of living. Participants in the seminar said that the Ministry of Planning uses the statistics on poverty in Egypt as a means of persuading international financial organizations to grant Egypt economic aid. Dr. Fathi al-Husayni, the consultant at the institute, claimed that the Egyptian economy is revenue-oriented and had become incapable of acquiring or benefiting from international development operations. He reminded participants that, in its effort to decide on economic assistance to Egypt, the World Bank still insists that the percentage of those falling below the poverty line be somewhere between 10 and 25 percent of the Egyptian population.

Libya

'Text' of Majles Delegation Joint Communique

LD0301125192 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1100 GMT
3 Jan 92

[Text] Tripoli, 3 Jan (JANA)—A joint communique was issued here last night at the end of the meetings between the delegations of the Iranian Majles and the General People's Congress in the Great Jamahiriyah. Here is the text of the communique:

1. The two sides reaffirm the unity of the word of Muslims in all parts of the Islamic world, and the rejection of differences. They also reaffirm that an aggression against any Islamic state is an aggression on all Muslims.

2. The two sides denounce the oppressive economic measures being taken against small, peaceful nations, and condemn the use of force or the threat to use force.

3. The two sides express their deep preoccupation and profound concern regarding the American provocations and threats against the Great Jamahiriyah—the threats which fall within the framework of a new plan that aims at threatening Libya on flimsy pretexts and excuses that cannot be supported by evidence or proof, a matter which by all ethical and legal standards is regarded as being unjust and oppressive, it also contravenes everything that has been agreed upon in international relations and the provisions of international law.

4. The two sides condemn the persecution actions being committed by the Zionist forces of occupation in the occupied territories, and reaffirm the Palestinian people's right to liberation, return, and the establishment of its independent state on the whole of its territory, and condemn the persecution against the sons of the Palestinian people, and denounce the absolute and unlimited support for the Zionist settlement policy.

5. While the two sides express their respect for the values of human rights, their commitment to the international legislations and agreements in this field, and their appreciation of the positive steps which came as a contribution of the peoples of the world in order to consecrate the noble human values, they condemn the political exploitation of the concept of human rights.

6. The Islamic Majles delegation considers that the stand taken by the Great Jamahiriyah in dealing with the allegations regarding the Pan Am crash over Lockerbie is correct. The Iranian delegation stresses the need for abiding by international law, resorting to a neutral international committee of investigation, and respecting the Great Jamahiriyah's sovereignty and its domestic laws. It also points out to the kind statement by the head of the judiciary in Iran during the Friday sermon in Tehran who said that if the U.S. and British courts claim the right to examine the case of the Pan Am crash, then those who had caused the downing of an Iranian airliner with a missile [qadhifah] from the cruiser "Vincennes" must be brought before Iranian courts. The two sides stress that international law does not stipulate the handing of the nationals of any independent and sovereign state to another state for trial, and that this constitutes an infringement of the state's sovereignty. The two sides agreed to form a friendship group between the Islamic Majles in Iran and the General People's Congress.

Planning Committee Statement on U.S. Sanctions

LD0201182192 Tripoli JANA in English 1656 GMT 2 Jan 92

[Text] Tripoli, Ay Annar [Jan] 2, JANA—Arab Maghreb Union's Pool—The General People's Committee for Economic Planning, having learned of the recent economic decisions issued by the United States of America wishes to state the following:

(1) At a time when the world, through the activities of its international organisations—particularly the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and GATT—is heading towards the liberalisation of international trade and abolishing all legal, customs and administrative restrictions that hinder the free and just movement of goods, the American decisions take the opposite direction and deprive a member state of the international community of the right to benefit from these aims, even though the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development is preparing to convene in Colombia during the next month of an-Nuar (February). The international community is looking forward to greater liberalisation in international trade.

(2) This decision will prevent the American companies from carrying out their contracts and undertaking their activities in the Jamahiriyah—particularly in the field of crude oil production. They will be prevented from obtaining financial returns. In addition deficiencies will result in the production of good quality crude oil which may contribute to the alleviation of environmental pollution from whose bad effects many countries have suffered recently.

(3) These decisions will directly affect the revenues of the Jamahiriyah and will reflect negatively on its ability to meet the basic needs of its citizens such as food and medicine. The international community does not approve of impairing such requirements in any way.

(4) The above-mentioned decisions will deprive the Jamahiriyah from the use of American dollars as a means of settlement and payment in meeting its international obligations vis a vis foreign contracted companies as well as the international organisations in which it participates. This will reflect negatively on the financial and technical assistance offered by the organisation to many poorer countries that require such assistance in addition to the Jamahiriyah's suspension of payments to all foreign contracted companies, foreign workers and contributions to regional and international organisations.

(5) This measure contradicts Article 33, of the Charter of States rights and economic obligations which states that no state has the right to use or encourage the use of any economic or political measures or any other form of pressure on another state. It contradicts as well the agreement for the establishment of the International Monetary Fund.

(6) This decision will inflict grevious economic hardship on the Libyan people.

Junior Officers Flee to Italy

PM0201150892 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 30 Dec 91 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Five Libyan Officers Flee To Rome"]

[Excerpt] London—AL-HAYAH has learned from Libyan opposition sources that five junior officers fled from Libya to Italy last week.

The sources said that an officer holding the rank of first lieutenant, namely 'Abd-al-Qadir Muhammad al-Khuwaylidi, took refuge in the Iraqi Embassy in Rome and requested to go to Baghdad. The other four—each hold the rank of lieutenant—requested to be transferred to the United States.

Meanwhile, the Libyan authorities continue to take measures in anticipation of a U.S. attack following the accusations leveled at them by Western states regarding the blowing up of the Pan Am plane over Lockerbie. The latest of these measures is the removal of street names and building numbers in Tripoli, the capital, perhaps for the purpose of camouflage and to make it more difficult for those carrying out any operation to identify the targets. [passage omitted]

Sudan

UAE Ambassador to Khartoum, 2 Officials Expelled

EA0501174592 Khartoum SUNA in English 1620 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Khartoum, 5 Jan (SUNA)—The Sudanese Government Sunday declared the ambassador of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to Sudan, Muhammad Sultan al-Suwaydi, and two other members of the staff of the UAE Embassy in Khartoum as personae non grata and gave them four days to leave the country.

Foreign Ministry's First Undersecretary Muhammad 'Uthman Yasin told SUNA that the expulsion order was taken on a tit-for-tat basis.

Yasin expressed regret that matters would escalate to such an extent between the two Arab [countries].

'Rule of Reciprocity' Cited

AB0501160792 Paris AFP in English 1526 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Khartoum, Jan 5 (AFP)—The Sudanese Government said Sunday it was expelling the United Arab Emirates ambassador, Muhammad Sultan al-Suwaydi, and two other UAE diplomats.

In a statement carried by the official news agency SUNA, the Foreign Ministry said the UAE Embassy was "informed Sunday that three of its diplomats, including the ambassador, are considered persona non grata and must leave Sudan within four days."

The move was in accordance with "the rule of reciprocity," the statement said, without specifying what measures the UAE took against Sudan. It gave no details on the two diplomats being expelled with the ambassador.

The influential daily AL-HAYAT, edited in London and published in Cairo, said Sunday that the expulsions were in protest against "the arrest of Sudanese in Abu Dhabi" after the Gulf war. Tens of thousands of Sudanese work in the UAE.

Sudan sided with Iraq during the Gulf crisis last year. Relations between Khartoum and Abu Dhabi worsened recently after Sudan accused the UAE of widespread arrests and torture of Sudanese because of Sudan's support for Iraq.

Foreign Minister 'Ali Sahlul has said talks with authorities in Abu Dhabi aimed at settling the problem were unsuccessful.

RCC To Transfer Some Powers to New Assembly

EA0401213592 Khartoum SUNA in English 1625 2 Jan 92

[Text] Khartoum, 2nd January (SUNA)—Chairman of the Revolution Command Council (RCC) General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir has said the transitional national assembly, due to be formed in the coming days, will have full legislative powers, indicating that the RCC will transfer the legislative powers it had been practising to the transitional national congress. In an interview made Thursday with him by the editor-in-chief of the London-based ARAB QUDS, 'Abd-al-Bari Atwan, Gen al-Bashir said the RCC's role will be confined to the steering of constitutional affairs and projection of the national unity. On Sudan's relations with neighbouring countries, he underlined that the Sudan is keen to maintain equal and friendly relations with all countries and not to be a party in any regional [word indistinct].

Gen al-Bashir pointed out the government has intention to negotiate with the rebellion movement's two factions separately stressing that the government welcomes peaceful talks with a unified delegation of the movement or two delegations at one time. The interview had tackled Sudan's relations with Arab countries and the world, in light of the recent visit of the Iranian president, Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, to the Sudan. The interview also dealt with the internal situations in the Sudan.

Al-Bashir Details New Political System

NC0401195692 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1534 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Khartoum, 4 Jan (MENA)—Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation, has said that the formation of a transitional national assembly before the end of January in Sudan represents the start of handing authority over to the people. Lt. Gen. al-Bashir was speaking at a news conference today in which he reviewed the provisions of the fifth constitutional decree concerning the country's political system. Lt. Gen. al-Bashir said that the Sudanese RCC will abandon its legislative powers in favor of the transitional national assembly. He explained, however, that it will retain

sovereign authority and responsibility for state security until the election of a national assembly.

Answering a question by MENA's correspondent in Khartoum concerning the status of the RCC after the election of the president and the vice president, Lt. Gen. al-Bashir said that the role of the Sudanese RCC will end upon the establishment of the new political system in various parts of Sudan. He said that the establishment of a new political system through elections and the election of the president and vice president of the Republic will take place within the next six months, before the celebration of the third anniversary of the Sudanese National Salvation Revolution on 30 July. He noted that the transitional national assembly will have 300 members and 12 committees.

Al-Amin Khalifah, member of the Sudanese RCC and who attended the news conference, explained that the political system in Sudan will be established on the basis of the people's conferences and that it will be composed of 7,000 basic conferences. He said that this political system is 100-percent Sudanese and that it was not copied from any other system in the world. He added that with the establishment of this political system in Sudan, the party system will end for good.

Kuwait

15 Oil Wells Drilled, Production Goals Met in 1991

LD0201113692 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0818 GMT 2 Jan 92

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 2 Jan (KUNA)—The newspaper SAWT AL-KUWAIT has attributed to an oil source that up to the end of 1991, 15 new oil wells have been drilled with an average production capacity of 5,000 barrels a day per well. [Passage omitted]

The same source confirmed that the Kuwait Oil company is currently pumping out oil from oil lakes and is storing it in special places where it is subjected to special chemical processing, as it is heavy oil which some of its hydrocarbon rich constituents had evaporated. The source said that oil production from this operation has reached 30,000 barrels a day. [Passage omitted]

Kuwait has already exceeded its oil production target for 1991, as production from within its territory has exceeded 400,000 barrels a day. This does not include Kuwait's share from the neutral zone.

Reaching this above-mentioned average of daily production of oil coincided with operations resuming at the Mina Abdullah refinery, which resumed operation with a production capacity of 100,000 barrels a day of refined oil.

Oman

French Defense Minister Departs Muscat 2 Jan

JN0201190492 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1730 GMT 2 Jan 92

[Text] Muscat, 2 Jan (WAKH)—French Defense Minister Pierre Joxe left Muscat today at the end of a visit to the Sultanate of Oman that lasted several days.

He was seen off upon his departure by Fahar Bin-Taymur al-Sa'id, deputy prime minister for security and defense affairs, and a number of Omani officials.

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd To Leave Riyadh for 'Rest'

LD0501140292 Riyadh SPA in English 1315 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Riyadh, Jan 5, SPA—Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz will spend some days of rest outside Riyadh effective Monday Jan 6, 1992, said a statement released by the royal court today.

Agricultural Projects Focus on Self-Sufficiency

LD0101113792 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1012 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Riyadh, 30 Dec (SPA)—The Ministry of Agriculture and Water has issued permits for the establishment of 14 agricultural projects in the regions of Ha'il, al-Washm, al-Jawf, Jizan, Wadi al- Dawasir, al-Qusaym, Bishah, and Medina at a total cost of 27,047,421 riyals. Seven of the projects will specialize in the production of barley, fodder, and fruit at a cost of 13,410,856 riyals. These will be established in the regions of Ha'il, al-Washm, al-Jawf, Wadi al-Dawasir, and al-Qusaym with a productive capacity of 899.2 tons of barley, 4,370 tons of fodder, 137.76 tons of dates, and 234.77 tons of fruit.

Another three projects, specializing in the production of barley and fodder, will be established in the regions of al-Qusaym and Ha'il at a cost of 6,003,433 riyals with a productive capacity of 635 tons of barley and 5,017 tons of fodder. Two projects will be established in the regions of al-Bishah and Medina to produce fruit and date palms at a cost of 3,389,401 riyals with a productive capacity of 286.25 tons of fruit and 76.5 tons of dates. A project will be established in al-Jawf region for the production of vegetables in plastic green houses at a cost of 2,548,091 riyals with a productive capacity of 149 tons of cucumbers and 496.64 tons of tomatoes. A project for the production of poultry will be established in al-Jizan region at a cost of 1,695,640 riyals with a productive capacity of 218,400 birds.

The establishment of those projects comes within the framework of the state's efforts to support and promote the agricultural sector to achieve self-sufficiency and expansion in production.

United Arab Emirates

Sudanese Ambassador, Diplomats Expelled

JN0501181192 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1755 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 5 Jan (WAKH)—The EMIRATES NEWS AGENCY [WAM] has learned that seven Sudanese diplomats working at the Sudanese Embassy in Abu Dhabi, including the ambassador, have been told to leave the country.

WAM said that the decision was made because these diplomats carried out activities which harm relations between the two countries, including the fabrication of false reports about the Sudanese community in the United Arab Emirates.

Zayid Receives Letter from Libya's al-Qadhdhafi

JN3012134991 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1315 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 30 Dec (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates, has received a letter from Libyan President Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi said to be related to bilateral relations within the framework of continued consultations between the two leaders on issues of mutual interest .

The letter was conveyed by the governor of the Central Bank of Libya when His Highness Shaykh Zayid received him here at noon today.

Republic of Yemen

Salih Receives Letter From Russia's Yeltsin

JN0401183592 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, today received a letter from Russian President Boris Yeltsin dealing with developments in the Russian Federation, in light of the Alma-Ata agreement and the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, in addition to issues related to bilateral relations.

The letter was delivered by the Russian ambassador in Sanaa, Igor Ivanshchenko, at a meeting with the brother president.

The meeting was attended by Yahya al-'Arashi, minister of state for cabinet affairs.

Spokesman Reacts to U.S. 'Groundless Statements'

JN0501123292 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1144 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Baghdad, 5 Jan (INA)—An official Iraqi spokesman has said that Iraq's position on Security Council Resolutions 706 and 712 is constant and will not change.

In a statement to INA today, a Foreign Ministry spokesman stressed that the U.S. call on Iraq to accept immediately and unconditionally the two resolutions contradicts what has been voiced by several organizations; bodies; and legal, economic, and political figures in the world, who have admitted that the two resolutions encroach greatly on Iraq's national sovereignty as an independent country and UN member.

U.S. State Department Spokesman Richard Boucher the day before yesterday called on Iraq to accept Security Council Resolutions 706 and 712, and claimed that the U.S. Government has extended $600 million worth of aid to Iraqi civilians.

The Iraqi official spokesman stressed that the mechanism stipulated in Resolutions 706 and 712 is complicated, unpractical, and cannot be applied. He added that the U.S. Administration itself is aware of this. However, through these two resolutions, which consecrate old colonialism in its ugliest form, it wants to perpetuate the economic embargo on Iraq and the sanctions committee measures, and to use the issue of the Iraqi people's health and living conditions as a political card with which to pressure Iraq. He noted that, in addition to this, the two resolutions give priority to meeting obligations toward the compensation fund and the other UN committees' expenses, thus isolating the two resolutions from the objective they claim to seek; namely, providing the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people.

He called on the U.S. Adminstration to abandon its inclination toward tyranny and persecution, and to stop imposing its unjust will on the Security Council, particularly as a significant number of council members have expressed the need to lift the embargo on Iraq, or at least to ease it.

The Iraqi official spokesman recalled that the United States led the coalition forces' aggression against Iraq and destroyed the Iraqi economy's main pillars, infrastructure, and basic civilian services within a set plan to destroy Iraq's capabilities, annihilate its people, strike at the symbols of its cultural awakening, vent their deep-rooted hatred, and serve the purposes of world Zionism under the banner of international legitimacy and new world order.

He said that the United States imposed the blockade resolutions through the UN Security Council, and still insists on maintaining the blockade despite the removal of its justifications and despite the calls raised throughout the world and in the UN Security Council demanding an end to it. The U.S. Administration went further to declare through its president from the UN podium that it links the lifting of the blockade to the form of political system in Iraq. Even the unjust UN Security Council resolutions have not stipulated this.

The spokesman asked: What kind of duality, opportunism, and hypocrisy is the United States trying to propagate under its new world order?

The spokesman described U.S. State Department Spokesman Boucher's claim that Washington has provided $600 million in aid to Iraqi civilians as groundless and an exposed falsification. He stressed that nothing was received in Iraq from the United States except what was provided during the U.S. intervention in northern Iraq in mid-1991, when the U.S. Government claimed that it had supplied the Kurds with foodstuffs worth $500 million.

The spokesman explained that the $600 million mentioned by Mr. Boucher can secure 1.5 million tonnes of food supplies that would meet the needs of the autonomous Kurdistan region for four and a half years if distributed in accordance with the ration card system. Meanwhile, the U.S. Government claims that the Kurdish region is suffering from an economic blockade and food shortages. How can these contradictions in the U.S. Administration's statements be explained?

The spokesman said that the $600 million mentioned by Mr. Boucher may constitute the expenses of the air bases in Turkey and the intensive U.S. flights over northern Iraq, as well as the expenses of the U.S. U-2 spy plane flights over Iraqi territory and the base from which this plane takes off in Saudi Arabia.

Concluding his statement, the spokesman said: The crimes committed by the United States against the Iraqi people and mankind are too grave to be concealed by Mr. Boucher's groundless statements.

Committee Discusses UN Resolutions on Oil Exports

JN2812153891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1435 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Baghdad, 28 Dec (INA)—Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, minister of state for foreign affairs, has asserted that UN Security Council Resolutions 701 and 706 concerning the sale of Iraqi oil, the import of food supplies, and the mechanism to apply them, contravene the UN Charter and constitute a flagrant violation of Iraq's sovereignty and independence.

In a seminar organized by the National Assembly's Arab and International Relations Committee to discuss the two resolutions, which concern Iraq's right to sell its oil, to import food supplies, and the mechanism for applying the resolutions, al-Sahhaf said: Iraq respects international legitimacy and international resolutions, provided that they do not interfere in its internal affairs or infringe upon its sovereignty, security, and independence under any circumstance.

The minister of state added that the United Nations thinks that Iraq will accept whatever resolutions the Security Council makes without any discussion. Therefore, it has issued these two resolutions and imposed numerous restrictions on the mechanism for applying them.

He explained that through these two resolutions, the United Nations wants to control the contracts, the buyers, and the means of exporting Iraqi oil. He said: It even wants to control the signing of contracts. It wants the revenues to be deposited in its fund. It also wants complete supervision over the import of food supplies and the means of distributing them to citizens inside Iraq. This confirms interference in Iraq's internal affairs and an infringement on its sovereignty, independence, and security; this is something which Iraq frankly rejects.

Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf asserted that the United Nations and the Security Council ran into trouble when they issued these two resolutions against Iraq because the restrictions imposed on the mechanism for applying them makes it very difficult to implement them accurately and completely. This, he added, will obstruct their application. He said: The United Nations apparently wants to obstruct the application of these two resolutions with the aim of forcing Iraq to implement them without any discussion. Iraq rejects this because it is the only party responsible for its internal affairs, security, and independence.

The minister of state for foreign affairs voiced Iraq's serious desire and interest in dealing with its neighbors and with all of the countries in the world, as well as regional and international organizations and agencies, on the basis of mutual respect, noninterference in its internal affairs, and a guarantee of Iraq's national and pan-Arab rights, free from all forms and means of maneuvering, deception, and double standards.

Oil Minister Criticizes Resolutions

JN0401185992 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1514 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Oil Minister Usamah 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Hiti has stressed that Security Council Resolutions 706 and 712, concerning Iraqi oil exports, constitute a flagrant act of intervention in Iraq's internal affairs and a violation of the country's sovereignty, security, and independence. Speaking at a symposium organized by the National Assembly's Arab and International Relations Committee to discuss the two resolutions, the minister said that Iraq has met its obligations as stipulated by the Security Council resolutions, and will not accept meddling in issues at the heart of its national and domestic sovereignty, especially its oil wealth.

The minister said that Iraq wants a full agreement with the United Nations because it respects world legitimacy. However, the United Nations, for its part, should realize and appreciate the nature of Iraq's circumstances after the treacherous 30-state aggression, which caused considerable destruction of Iraq's oil facilities while intending to destroy the state's infrastructure in general. Despite damage to oil facilities, the minister said, virtuous efforts to reconstruct what the villains have destroyed succeeded in operating, once again, the oil installations, enabling them to meet domestic needs fully and regularly. Mr. al-Hiti exposed U.S. attempts to influence the United Nations to impose further restrictions against Iraq through the mechanism of implementing Resolutions 706 and 712, and the ways and methods of Iraq's oil exports. The United Nations, he noted, realized that it embroiled itself in issuing the two resolutions because they are impossible to implement using the set mechanism.

The minister discussed OPEC's weakness because of its surrender to the pressures of the Saudi regime and the deviant oil policies of some countries influenced by this regime, which seek to flood the world market with oil and maintain low prices that harm Iraq.

Saddam Husayn Gives Army Day Address

JN0601092592 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0820 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] Baghdad, 6 Jan (INA)—Staff Field Marshal President Saddam Husayn, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, has said that Iraq's army and people have recorded for the nation and mankind new evidence of almighty God's ability to grant victory to those he likes and defeat to those he dislikes. This came in an address by the president to the sons of the great Iraqi people, the glorious Arab nation, and the gallant men in our Armed Forces this morning over the radio network and Iraqi television on the 71st anniversary of the establishment of the Iraqi Army.

His excellency said: The only option before those who refuse to be in the abyss of the unknown, which only harbors evil, is to rely on God, reject tyranny, and to seek help from God to face the idol which came to us from overseas and beyond the oceans. Their only option is to say no to all the arrogant evil gathering, which stands lowly before virtues. And this no should be on the level and of the size of what God wants.

His excellency said: The knights of Iraq are today the model of chivalry in its loftiest features, positively affecting the identity of the nation's sons.

He added: In the Mother of Battles, the Iraqi Army turned into the knight of principles and the symbol of leadership and faith, enjoying the strength given by God. Our great moral supply was that of all strugglers on the side of faith—faith in God, right, and great principles; those who recalled and invoked the right of the nation, the right of humanity, and the right of Iraq.

The president said: The Mother of Battles came to free Arab knights everywhere from their dual character, after the missiles of al-Husayn, al-'Abbas, and al-Hijarah roaringly traveled to retaliate against the cursed Israel as an inevitable response to its aggressiveness and to the conspiracy of world Zionism against Baghdad and Arabism.

His excellency said that the reason for the dual character among some Arabs was not the inaccuracy of history or the exaggeration in recording it. Rather it lies in the fact that those Arabs did not possess, in this age, the personality involving the honorable actions that characterized the Arabs of old.

The president said: A year ago, on 6 January 1991, the drums of war in the ranks of atheism, betrayal, and treachery were beating. The two sides met in a battle unprecedented in the history of mankind, except for the battles waged by those chosen by God as his prophets and messengers to humanity. A year ago, the two sides stood opposite each other. There was the assembly of faith and right, the party of God, represented by the Army and Armed Forces of Iraq on the land from where Abraham came to declare his belief and message and to be the father of prophets, the land of the two immortal rivers in great Iraq. And there was the assembly of atheism, aggression, and evil, with all their representatives in all hideouts of vice, treachery, and betrayal of God, humanity, and principles on earth.

His excellency added: The kind land of our nation was the place God Almighty chose for his messengers and all his prophets. The Arabs were the ones who shouldered the responsibility of carrying each divine message in order to expand the circle of faith and believers.

This placed on the shoulders of the Arabs the burden of defending it, sometimes with the edge of the sword. Likewise, this required the Arabs to be firm like the edge of the sword in their words and conduct.

His excellency said: It has become customary for the Arabs to honor this duty relentlessly. God Almighty firmly stated that Muhammad, may God's peace be upon him, is the last of the prophets and messengers, and that Islam is the last religion revealed by God. All this was accompanied by the great history in terms of the traits of the nation's sons and men, particularly that they are committed to their words, and that their utterances that indicate their stances are their constitution, which they would not change even if their heads or throats were severed.

His excellency added: The meanings of knighthood, with all its loftiness and high values, are synonymous with the most exulted principles which were entrenched and enriched by religious belief. Because the Arabs were the first to discover writing, which took place in Iraq; and because the divine messages were delivered to the prophets verbally, and the prophets, along with their companions and disciples, were concerned to record events, the Arab nation's history is more accurate than that of any other nation throughout times when humanity became a great cultural and civilized value, and a great humanitarian value. Because the Arabs, based on the aforementioned, understood and learned their history, they lived under the yoke of flagrant contradictions, or rather a terrible duality that produced schizophrenia in the character of many of the nation's sons, particularly the educated ones. This schizophrenia is due to the contradiction they encounter between any bright link in their culture in the past and their creative humanitarian role in it when compared to the nation's present and the individual's role in it. This contradiction is also evident in the role of the nation and its individuals in spreading the divine messages and the earthly laws under the leadership and guidance of the prophets when compared to the nation's individual, his role, position, and conduct in recent ages. In these ages, continuity with the bright ages ceased, and compatibility between words and deeds was absent—something which existed in the links of the glorious past.

His excellency the president added that the dichotomy between Arab action when faithful swords were in the hands of men who vindicated the mission, right, and honor on the one hand, and on the other between the deeds of those mistakenly considered Arabs is bound to come to one's mind sharply and strongly. To these Arabs, the prime task of the sword in the age of decline, the latest parts of which we are experiencing, has become exclusively confined to serving foreigners and slaying kinfolk, thanks to the foreigners' machinations and gimmicks. This can also be attributed to the pressures exerted by the factors of backwardness, which have been at work in Arab life for 700 years, the lifetime of decline in the nation's history, which began after the practical fall of Baghdad, or after its official fall under the hooves of Hulegu's horses in 1258 A.D. The military sons of the nation were the persons mostly embarrassed and frustrated when they recalled the nation's bright history.

His excellency the president went on to say: This wound festers and this feeling of dualism exacerbates when history, and its honorable past deeds are compared with the present and its components. Colonialism and a handful of Zionists seized the beloved land of Palestine in 1948, and later seized Jerusalem, where the third holiest shrine and the first qiblah [direction to which Muslims turn in praying] is located, in 1967. In one way or another, this state of affairs has remained basically unchanged, despite the fact that the Iraqis and the valiant Iraqi Army were intrinsically freed from this dichotomy and this duality during the faithful and honorable confrontation in the second al-Qadisiyah battle, where they triumphed in August 1988.

Then came the Mother of Battles to set free the knights of Arabism everywhere from this duality after the al-Husayn, al-'Abbas, and al-Hijarah missiles were fired to reply thunderously to accursed Israel, and to address an inevitable reply to its aggressiveness and also to the conspiracy of world Zionism to strike Arab Baghdad. Thus, the Mother of Battles told everybody that the history of faithful knighthood as we read it in our history books is correct and accurate, and that the duality plaguing some Arabs does not lie in an inaccurate reporting of historical events or in an exaggeration of these events, but rather in that those Arabs who belong to this category and live in this age do not have the personality traits that qualify them to perform honorable acts similar to the traits that marked the conduct of

Arabs in the past, as inscribed in the annals of history. The presence of the basic and necessary factors, their strong interaction with their environment, and a feeling for the sacred duty dictated by deep faith makes a revival of these great and honorable models in the nation's history, and the history of mankind as well, not only possible, but also inevitable.

President Saddam Husayn said: The major deficiency in the Arab's character these days, wherever he may be, cannot be attributed to genetics, but rather lies in the character of those who are responsible for it and for not providing the appropriate environment for his character to be formed as it used to be; faithful and capable of carrying out sincere, accurate, and faithful action. Thus, Iraq's knights have become the gate of chivalry in its most exalted sense. This positively affected the characters of the nation's sons. The knights of the nation have also been liberated from duality, and chivalry began to derive its revolutionary, realistic meanings in the armies of many Third World countries and all the world states from the Mother of Battles and from the fighting and steadfastness in it by our valiant Armed Forces and their reliance on faith in God and the firm rights of our people and nation in their confrontation of the idol of this age, which appeared in its most hideous, darkest, terroristic, oppressive, and tyrannical image. This is a great honor and role for our people and Armed Forces.

His excellency explained that everyone stood under his flag and Iraq was named as a representative of God the Merciful in the Mother of Battles. The ranks of infidelity, atheism, treason, and treachery used to hide behind various banners. They did not declare themselves or their intentions, believing that they would deceive God and mankind. In fact, they only deceived themselves. Ignominy to them. Among these ranks were some ugly-looking faces of hypocrites and Croesuses, as though emerging from graves with ignominy covering their faces, to declare the evil continuity of the history of Abu-Rughal [an Arab traitor who led the Abyssinians to Mecca] and the Croesus, who were humiliated by God. They are the companions of evil and the eaters of the bitter tree of Hell. The whole world stood as witness to the fighting and confrontation. God Almighty was the best of witnesses to members of the two camps [the faithful and infidels camps], their objectives, and the intentions of both sides of the confrontation.

His excellency added: While the hearts of the believers were with the trench of faith, where our ranks were standing, imploring God to grant victory to our gathering, the hearts of the people of blasphemy and vice and the traitors—who humiliated their people, relinquished their dignity, squandered their money, and exposed themselves, and who were counted among the ranks of our glorious nation—were calling on their satan to defeat the faithful gathering. They were in agreement in this with the enemies of God, who surround the land of Iraq, who killed all virtue in their heart, and who acted out of deception, vice, and hateful meanness. At that time, statements were made in light of intentions. The representatives of the two gatherings spoke about their gatherings. The faithful people spoke about their gathering. After seeking help from God, when they spoke about bravery, they spoke about the great Iraqi Army, the army of al-Qadisiyah and the Mother of Battles. Thus, the army of Iraq became the knight of principles and the slogan of leadership and faith, which embody the power sought by God in this confrontation. Despite the known differences in the criteria of technical and material balance with all its forms and degrees, our resort to the army of the nation, the army of Iraq—after relying on God—was sound and right. And the brave stand of our Armed Forces on our side and on the side of all believers was sound and honest. Here and there, there were frightened hearts. And God alone knows the unknown.

His excellency said: Our great moral support was the support of all the mujahidin in the camp of faith; it was faith in God, justice, and great principles. We recalled the right of the nation, mankind, and an Iraq that is accepted by God. We also recalled the essence and spirit of the confrontation that was waged between faith on the one hand and the Byzantine and Persian empires of polytheists, aggression, and evil 1,400 years ago, on the other. We recalled the heroes, their known stands, and the great results. O ye who believe. If ye will help the cause of Allah, He will help you, and plant your feet firmly. [Koranic verse]

In such a situation, there should not be hesitation or retreat on the part of those who are concerned about freedom given by God and underscored by Prophet Muhammad, may God's prayers and peace be upon him, his righteous companions, and the orthodox caliphs. The words of 'Umar Bin-al-Khattab, may God be pleased with him—why have you enslaved people who are born free—will remain a loud cry in the face of every criminal tyrant.

Addressing our great people, our glorious nation, and the gallant fighters of our Army, President Saddam Husayn said: Those who reject to be thrown into the unknown, which is meant only to be evil, have no option but to rely on God, reject tyranny, and seek God's help against the idle that came to us from overseas. They have no option but to say no to all that wicked and arrogant assembly, which looks very small in front of virtue. This no must be as big and loud as God wants.

His excellency added: Everybody wondered, then, whether the Iraqi Army was gallant enough, and whether the Iraqi Armed Forces, in general, were up to the challenge.

His excellency wondered: Is the leadership of Iraq, including God's servant Saddam Husayn, right when it boasts about its knights and men?

Many studies to compare and show the differences in the balance of power were made. And we must say that there was a clear difference if material and technical aspects alone were to be considered. But we have never thought that those considerations are the decisive ones, although we prepared for them the force that terrifies the enemies

of God and believers. They dared not attack Baghdad, which is proud of its people and history, and which is cherished by every zealous believer, before they gathered more than 30 states. This, in brief, was the picture at the frontlines, before the firing took place; that is, a year from today. Many people held their breath, with God helping the believers to feel relaxed and easy. But the breath of some people on the losing opposite side was accelerating, and they appeared like lurking vicious dogs ambushing a prey.

His excellency said: The Army and Armed Forces of Iraq have their hands firmly on triggers as ordered by God. They are raising the great banner, which was the slogan and essence of the Mother of Battles, the banner of God Is Great. And the people of great Iraq, from end to end, are roaring, holding fast to the rope of God. What happened has happened. The people and Army of Iraq have given the nation and humanity further proof of God's ability to grant victory to those He likes and to defeat those he dislikes. Does the Iraqi Army not deserve this status with God and among people? Do Iraq's Armed Forces not deserve the prayers of all believers and good people wherever they exist? Does the Iraqi Army not deserve that we celebrate its anniversary on 6 January every year at the national, pan-Arab, and even the human level? Were we not right when we relied on the mujahid knights of the Army? Has the Iraqi Army not kept its promise despite everything.?

President Saddam Husayn cited the following Koranic verses:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. O ye who believe. Shall I lead you to a bargain that will save you from a grievous penalty? That ye believe in God and His apostle, and that you strive your utmost in the cause of God, with your property and your persons. That will be best for you if ye but knew. He will forgive you your sins, and admit you to Gardens beneath which rivers flow, and to beautiful mansions in Gardens of Eternity: That is indeed the supreme achievement. And another favor He will bestow, which ye do love—help from God and a speedy victory. So give the glad tidings to the believers.

His excellency concluded his pan-Arab speech by saying: God is great, and may He have mercy on the virtuous martyrs.

God is great, and may He grant pride and glory to every Iraqi man and woman who continued to see the facts and the truth and acted accordingly despite the intensity of enemy fire; those Iraqis who returned to continue the march after a setback caused by the heavy aggression.

God is great, and greetings to the mujahidin of Palestine, the mujahidin of the nation, and all good people in the world, who are working so that virtue and what pleases God may not desert our planet.

God is great, and accursed be the lowly.

Opposition Agrees on Saddam Confrontation Plan

SAIRI Leader on Guidelines

JN3112151891 Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 26 Dec 91 pp 1, 2

[Text] Damascus—Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, head of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI], has called on all of the countries in the region to help the Iraqi people and to save them from the tribulations which they are experiencing at the hands of the ruling regime in Iraq. In an interview with TISHRIN, al-Hakim appealed to these countries to offer aid and assistance to the people in the region, people who are experiencing an economic siege and living under tragic circumstances as a result of the unjust policy Saddam Husayn exercises against the northern and southern regions of Iraq.

Al-Hakim said: How can European countries offer aid and assistance to the Iraqi people while the Arab and Islamic countries in this region abstain from performing their humanitarian duty and fail to come to the assistance of our people in Iraq?

Al-Hakim added: The Iraqi regime seeks to keep the best of what is available for itself and its henchmen while the Iraqi people are experiencing desperate circumstances that serve to encourage corruption and bribery, manifestations of which are destroying Iraqi society.

Al-Hakim said that the Iraqi regime, which is conspiring against the Iraqi people and the region, thus is serving Israel. It did the same thing during its wars against the two Muslim countries of Iran and Kuwait. More Iraqis have been killed by this regime than were killed during these two wars, and this regime is continuing its criminal actions against Iraq and mankind.

Al-Hakim described the situation in Iraq as tragic and insecure.

Al-Hakim said: In light of these developments, we, as an opposition, have adopted five major guidelines:

1. To depend on the people and to mobilize the nation against the ruling clique.
2. To unite the Iraqi opposition forces and establish a political entity that will be capable of supervising operations against the regime and depriving it of its legitimacy.
3. To emphasize the importance of the army in assisting the people through the work of senior commanders who have contacted us and asked us to seek arrangements for Iraq's future.
4. To take into consideration the various regional stands and to rely on neighboring countries for support and assistance to the Iraqi people.
5. The international public opinion and stand: To depend on and to implement UN Security Council resolutions and to abrogate those resolutions which harm the Iraqi people and which have been passed as a

result of the invasion carried out by Saddam Husayn against the State of Kuwait.

Army Officers Said To Join Opposition

PM0201152292 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 29 Dec 91 pp 1, 6

['Abd-al-Mun'im al-A'sam report: "Opposition Searches for Alternatives and Prepares for Its General Conference"]

[Excerpt] London—Iraqi opposition sources have said that regular military leaderships and units informed parties opposed to the Saddam Husayn regime of their willingness to engage in any general people's uprising to topple the regime. And on Friday opposition forces will hold an important meeting in Damascus to decide on a new mechanism for conducting opposition political activity and laying the foundations for an alternative authority in the country.

The sources told SAWT AL-KUWAYT that a number of Iraqi Army officers have actually joined the fighters' strongholds in northern Iraq and carried with them an authorization from their colleagues in the military establishment to focus joint action to topple the Saddam Husayn government. They added that the intelligence organs last week launched a large-scale campaign of arrests inside army units following reports about liaison and insurrection within the regular forces.

The sources emphasized that the biggest campaign of arrests took place in the Abu Gharib camps near the capital, Baghdad, in Jalula', east of the capital, and in Ghazlani in Mosul.

Shaykh Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, and Jalal Talabani, joint chairman of the Kurdistan Front, last week announced that the Iraqi Army would join the people's uprising and hinted at a plan to step up the activities against the regime throughout the country.

For his part, Sami al-Ma'jun, chairman of the Iraqi National Reform organization, has said that the negotiations being held in Damascus by Iraqi opposition parties have so far resulted in three formulas for unifying the opposition and establishing a mechanism for its future action.

Al-Ma'jun told SAWT AL-KUWAYT over the telephone that there were encouraging signs in the process of drawing up a new joint action plan to topple the Saddam Husayn regime. This comes at a time when the regime is stepping up its repressive campaign, which concentrated recently on army barracks. He added that events are moving rapidly on all fronts, and regional powers must increase their assistance to the opposition, provide it with facilities, and prevent the regime from exploiting some of the gaps in order to delay its downfall. [passage omitted]

Al-Hakim on Action Guidelines

PM0601102492 Jeddah 'UKAZ in Arabic 31 Dec 91 p 1

[Samir al-Hayari report: "Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim Tells 'UKAZ: Five-Point Plan To Topple Saddam Endorsed"]

[Text] Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, an Iraqi opposition leader, has said that Iraqi opposition parties have agreed on five main guidelines for eliminating the tragic conditions being experienced by the Iraqi people as a result of the practices of their corrupt regime.

Al-Hakim told 'UKAZ by telephone from Damascus that these main outlines include:

—Relying on the people and organizing the nation against the ruling clique.
—Unifying Iraqi opposition forces and forming a political entity capable of running the operations against the ruling regime and withdrawing its legitimacy.
—The importance of the Army's role in backing the people through the senior commanders who have contacted us and requested that arrangements be made with regard to Iraq's future.
—The regional position: relying on the neighboring states to provide support and backing for the Iraqi people.
—The world public and the international position: proceeding from, and working to implement, the international resolutions issued by the UN Security Council, which are harming the Iraqi people and which were adopted because of Saddam Husayn's invasion of the State of Kuwait [sentence as published].

Meanwhile, al-Hakim appealed to all world states to intervene to help save the Iraqi people from the tragic plight inflicted on them by their regime.

He added that the Iraqi regime, which is pursuing a conspiratorial policy against its people and against the region's states, is thus doing Israel a great service, just as it did with its war with Iran and its invasion of the State of Kuwait.

Opposition Blames Government for Car Bomb Attack

PM0601093692 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 3 Jan 92 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Opposition Blames Regime for Baghdad Explosion and Expects Reprisals Against United Nations"]

[Excerpt] London, Baghdad, Damascus, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, news agencies—The Iraqi opposition has accused President Saddam Husayn's government of perpetrating the car bomb explosion outside the Sheraton Hotel in Baghdad last Monday, while SANA has said that the Iraqi authorities have executed a number of military personnel and civilians in various areas of the country.

Ibrahim al-Mutayri, a member of the Islamic Action Organization Politburo in Iraq, told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT by telephone that special sources in Iraq told the organization that the explosion was carried out by the regime itself and that it was targeted at UN experts and envoys in Iraq, whose presence is rejected by the regime. The sources added that the Iraqi regime is planning reprisals against UN targets.

Al-Mutayri said that the Iraqi regime carried out the bomb attack to launch a large-scale campaign of arrests that included Army personnel, university professors and students, and ordinary citizens.

In Damascus the SYRIAN NEWS AGENCY (SANA) reported that a few days ago the Iraqi authorities executed a number of military personnel and civilians, adding that a violent response is imminent in Iraq following the executions carried out in Mosul and Salah al-Din (northern Iraq) and al-Anbar (central Iraq). [passage omitted]

Kurdish Leader Jalal Talabani on Elections

PM3012134291 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 21 Dec 91 p 5

[Interview with Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and cochairman of the Iraqi Kurdistan Front, by 'Adnan Husayn in Iraqi Kurdistan; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Husayn] The Kurdistan Front [IKF] has recently decided to hold a general election in Iraqi Kurdistan. What is the front's aim?

[Talabani] The decision made by the front's political leadership concerns elections to the Kurdistan national council, which will be elected on the basis of proportional representation. The council will be empowered to make decisions on the Kurdish people's crucial issues. The IKF consists of certain parties, but the national council will represent all the people of Iraqi Kurdistan, that is, its various parties, groups, and classes. That is why it will have the authority to make crucial decisions. [passage omitted]

[Husayn] In light of Mas'ud Barzani's latest visit to Baghdad, how does the IKF view agreement with the authorities?

[Talabani] We all knew about Mas'ud Barzani's visit to Baghdad. Its purpose was not to resume negotiations on autonomy. The aim of the visit was to discuss the question of peace and truce in Kurdistan and to settle the issue of the administrations withdrawn by the authorities. Personally, I see no hope of reaching agreement with a dictatorship which refuses to take any democratic measures in Iraq and which refuses to change or amend its policies, persisting with the criminal and treacherous line that it has pursued for years. [passage omitted]

[Husayn] There are those who believe that the IKF had a historic opportunity to establish its own authority, its own autonomous authority, when the Iraqi Government withdrew its administration from Kurdistan.

[Talabani] I agree with those who hold that view. I happen to hold the same view.

[Husayn] My question is why did the IKF refrain from taking such a step?

[Talabani] You have to ask those who made that decision. [passage omitted]

[Husayn] If the Iraqi authorities manage to regroup and to launch a large-scale attack on Kurdistan, do you believe the peshmerga forces will be able to confront them?

[Talabani] I believe that in the present circumstances we are capable of doing that. The people's morale is now high, whereas the Iraqi Army's morale is low. The Iraqi Government is in no position to commit the army to a major offensive. The Iraqi Army no longer fights as efficiently as it did in the past—not because of cowardice or failure, but because the Army has begun to realize that the dictator, Saddam Husayn, leads the country from one massacre to another and from one losing battle to another. I believe the Iraqi Government is aware of this fact, which explains its withdrawal of its forces from Kurdistan. [passage omitted]

[Husayn] The IKF has decided to send a delegation to Damascus. What for?

[Talabani] To hold talks with the Syrian Government and Arab Socialist Ba'th Party leadership with a view to developing the existing relations between the two sides, and also to participate in the Iraqi opposition's talks regarding the opposition's second conference.

[Husayn] What is there to prevent such a conference from being held in Kurdistan?

[Talabani] I see no reason why not.

[Husayn] Some people claim that certain members of the IKF are opposed to, or have reservations about, holding it in Kurdistan.

[Talabani] As far as the PUK is concerned, we would welcome holding the conference here.

[Husayn] If it is decided to hold it in Saudi Arabia, what position would the opposition take?

[Talabani] I cannot speak for the IKF, but the PUK would attend the conference wherever it is held. We do not care so much about the venue as we do about preparations for the conference. We believe that good preparations are necessary if the conference is to succeed in providing a democratic alternative acceptable within Iraq, regionally and internationally. [passage omitted]

[Husayn] Some Arabs accuse you of playing a dangerous political game and claim that Talabani is the biggest Kurdish secessionist of all. What do you say to that?

[Talabani] I have never denied my political position or the objectives I am struggling for. You can find them in published books and articles. Anyone anywhere could refer back to them. I have always called for, and I still call for, self-determination for the Kurdish people. I considered autonomy one way of exercising that right in the light of Iraq's circumstances. I do not fear the charge of secessionism. I believe that those who see me as a secessionist have a colonialist mentality and are bourgois Arabs. [passage omitted]

Once again I say that I do not fear the secession charge because I believe that the right of secession is part of the right of self-determination, but actullay I do not advocate secession. I believe that democracy is the solution to the Kurdish problem in Iraq. The Kurds of Iraq could play a major part in establishing democracy in Iraq. One of the most important elements of democracy in Iraq, at present and in the future, is the Kurdish liberation movement. That is why I lean toward self-determination for the Kurds within a democratic Iraq, whether in a federation, confederation, or autonomy. Another reason why I do not call for secession is that I believe that in secession cannot in fact be achieved. A sensible man leading a big movement cannot drive his people toward unattainable objectives and cannot give his movement impossible tasks or tasks difficult to fulfill. That is why I say that, while I believe in the Kurdish people's right to secession and independence, I do not advocate secession. [passage omitted]

Arab Front Condemns Israeli Deportation Decision

JN0401190992 Baghdad Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] A spokesman for the Central Committee of the Arab Liberation Front has made the following statement on the occupation authorities' decision to deport 12 Palestinians:

The occupation authorities carried out a new terrorist act, deciding to deport 12 Palestinians from their homes on the eve of the Arab delegations' departure for Washington to resume the bilateral talks. This is a remarkable escalation of the oppressive measures against our people in the occupied homeland, and it underscores Israel's insistence on its aggressive and expansionist policy, which conflicts with the international conventions and the most fundamental of human rights.

The decision is a slap in the face of all those who wager on changes in the positions of the Zionist enemy. However, it constitutes a stronger slap in the face of the international organization and its bodies, which removed the label of racism from the Zionist movement. The decision also constitutes a flagrant defiance of world public opinion, which strongly condemns the practices of the occupation authorities, and the silence and collusion of the United States. Moreover, the decision exposes the false talk about world legitimacy and shows that it is being used as a cover. This legitimacy continues to be a tool in the hand of the U.S. Administration to impose the blockade against Iraq, deprive its children of food and medicine, and remain silent on the crime against the people of Palestine and the daily crimes perpetrated by the occupation authorities and the herds of settlers against women and children.

The occupation authorities are mistaken if they believe that this decision, and other oppressive measures and practices, can restrict our people's will and determination to escalate their struggle and develop their valiant popular intifadah as the only way to wrest all of our inalienable and historic rights to our territory and homeland.

While we, in the Arab Liberation Front, call on Arab and world public opinion to launch the most intensive campaign of solidarity with the just struggle of our people, and to condemn the policy of deportations and land confiscations, we call on the Security Council to rid itself of the influence of the U.S. Administration, by issuing a resolution that returns all Palestinian deportees to their homeland and brings an end to all oppressive practices of the occupation. We also hope that delaying the departure of the Palestinian delegation for Washington will mark the beginning of a serious period of self-assessment proceeding from a deep understanding of the facts of the current situation, and the perils of submission to U.S. pressures and Zionist conditions. We must aim at achieving a unified Palestinian position, one that adopts all forms of struggle as the only option to attain the goals of our people and to restore their full rights to their territory and soil. It is a revolution until victory.

Observations on Arab-Israeli Talks Discussed

JN0301184092 Baghdad Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] Brothers: A round of bilateral talks [between the Arab and Israeli delegations] will resume on 7 January, and the multilateral talks will take place at the end of this month. Two basic observations can be made despite what is being reiterated on these talks, the expected results, or the topics that will be discussed.

These talks have made progress with regard to bilateral issues between the Zionist entity and the delegation of the Syrian regime. The last round was confined to the talks between the two sides. Thus, we can term them as separate talks, after the Zionist delegation refused to hold talks with the Jordanian and Palestinian delegations separately. The Zionist delegation categorically rejected the Palestinian and Jordanian tracks without U.S. intervention, even though the talks were held in the corridors of the U.S. Department of State.

The second observation is that—despite the optimistic statements that were made by this or that party regarding

the next round of bilateral talks, and despite some Palestinian implications that the Zionist side will make concessions on the issue of negotiations by agreeing to hold talks with the Palestinian delegation independently, or at least by agreeing on the Palestinian track—the Zionist side did not issue anything to indicate even a slight change in the declared position of the Shamir government. The enemy government continues to reiterate its firm and well-known intransigent position vis-a-vis all issues. It still insists on not withdrawing from the occupied Palestinian and Arab territory; it reiterates its right to continue building settlements in our Palestinian territory; and it is preparing for a new settlement campaign in this year to immigrate 1 million Jews from the Commonwealth of Independent States, the former USSR.

With regard to the alleged autonomy, Shamir still asserts that this formula means that the inhabitants, not the territory, and that, at best, it will not exceed procedural issues and some administrative aspects.

Hence, all expectations on the results of the next round of bilateral talks are illusions that are a continuation of the illusions that have governed the moves and action of some parties since the beginning of the settlement [taswiyah] march—Baker's moves, the Madrid conference, and the Washington talks.

Our Palestinian people will continue to ignore what is happening, adopting their only option—the option of armed struggle—and escalating the confrontation with the occupation authorities.

76 Said Executed in Karbala' for Opposing Saddam

NC0601141092 (Clandestine) Voice of the Iraqi People in Arabic 1300 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] Sources in the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI] have stated that the 2 December coup attempt failed because of an informer, officer [name indistinct]. A statement by SAIRI media bureau said the tyrant has ordered the arrest and execution of 80 officers.

In another development, the tyrant's troops have executed 76 persons, including six Egyptians, in Karbala' on charges of taking part in the popular uprising and opposing the tyrant's regime. Eyewitnesses have said that they saw 15-year-old children and elderly people among those executed.

Defense Minister Supervises Executions

NC0501164292 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1605 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] On 31 December and under the supervision of the defense minister, the well-known criminal 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, seven citizens—three Kurds and four Arabs—were executed by firing squad in Karkuk. The execution took place in front of the local administration building in Karkuk. This criminal forced the citizens to witness this crime and clap for the murderers.

Regime Said To Launch Terrorist Acts 17 Jan

NC0401135692 (Clandestine) Voice of the Iraqi People in Arabic 1300 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] [words indistinct] The Iraqi opposition movement in Damascus says that they have accurate and confirmed information that terrorist groups financed by the tyrant regime plan to launch terrorist and (?conventional) operations against embassies of countries that backed Kuwait during the tyrant's occupation.

Kuwait's AL-WATAN has cited these sources as saying that they expect these terrorist operations to begin on 17 January, the day Operation Desert Storm was launched.

Negotiators Ready To Talk Without Palestinians

JN0401203792 Baghdad Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] While Arab negotiators were preparing to travel to Washington to meet with the delegation of the Zionist enemy, terrorist Shamir ordered his gangs to deport 12 Palestinians from Gaza, in a move against all international laws, norms, and resolutions. As terrorist Shamir says, the reason is the killing of a Zionist settler in Gaza.

Shamir deliberately issued this criminal order while the Arab negotiators were preparing to leave for Washington. It would appear that he intended to defy the sentiments of the Arab delegations, the host country, and, indeed, the entire world, which has been condemning the oppressive Zionist practices against our people. Yes, Shamir's decision was provocative, entailing a great deal of defiance, arrogance, and self-conceit.

And yet, Shamir's decision failed to trigger any response from Washington or any of those Western capitals that always crow about democracy, freedom, and human rights. As for the Arab negotiating delegations, they only denounced the deportation decision and protested its issuance. But after this, they left for airports and to Washington to resume negotiations with the Zionist enemy.

Only the Palestinian delegation suspended its travel pending new instructions from the PLO. Irrespective of the forthcoming instructions, the fact has become clear to everybody: The Arab delegations have once again demonstrated their determination to negotiate and reconcile with the Zionist enemy, and showed that they are ready to do this even if it meant isolating the Palestinian cause and negotiating with the enemy in isolation from the Palestinians, their positions, and their demands, which constitute the central issue of the region.

This fact will give the Zionist enemy a feeling of strength and push it toward further intransigent policies and insistence on Arab surrender to its conditions. At best, the negotiators will be forced to return empty-handed, but after sitting with the enemy and normalizing relations with it.

Delegation Leaves for Washington Peace Talks

TA0601055992 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] The Israeli delegation to the peace talks in Washington left Israel in the early hours of the morning in an Air Force Boeing jet. It is expected that they will remain in Washington until the middle of next week. The entire delegation, together with advisers, numbers more than 150 people. Deputy Minister Binyamin Netanyahu did not take the flight because he plans to participate in the debate today on direct election of prime ministers. The director general of the Foreign Ministry, Yosef Hadas, said before leaving that as far as Israel is concerned, the talks in principle begin tomorrow. The Arab delegations have delayed departure over Israel's decision to deport 12 Palestinians for acts of terrorism and incitement against the state.

No 'Significant Progress' Expected

TA0601065192 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] Despite the decision to deport 12 Palestinians and the Arab threats not to show up, the members of the Israeli delegation to the peace negotiations expect the current round of talks to take place. The Israeli team does not expect any significant progress, but said that continuing the peace process is the most important thing. Our correspondent 'Ido Baum saw the delegation off at Ben-Gurion Airport last night:

Several minutes before leaving for Washington, the members of the three delegations to the second round of the peace negotiations in Washington seem optimistic regarding the talks' chances. The deportation of the 12 Palestinians may cause somewhat of a delay in the talks; however, it will not result in their being totally called off. Here is an interview we held with Uri Lubrani, head of the delegation to the talks with Lebanon, in the red-carpeted VIP room several minutes before takeoff.

[Begin recording] [Baum] Mr. Lubrani, you are now leaving for another round of talks in Washington. Are you sure it will take place?

[Lubrani] There is no certainty. I believe it will take place. There may be a delay of one or two days, but I think it will eventually take place.

[Baum] Do you think that the deportation of the 12 Palestinians will have a truly detrimental effect on the talks, or is this just a public relations gimmick [preceding word in English] on the part of the Arabs?

[Lubrani] I do not believe that it will have any real effect on the talks. I do not know if one could call it a gimmick, but I feel that this matter will not affect the talks, nor should it. We have to explain clearly that holding peace talks in Washington does not guarantee immunity for terror activities. The Washington talks will not prevent us from taking action against terror when necessary. [end recording]

Sources—Arab Delay of Talks Violates Agreements

TA0601085192 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 6 Jan 92 p 1

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[Excerpt] Senior Israeli political sources made it clear last night that in deciding not to show up on schedule for the Washington talks, the Jordanians and the Palestinians are violating the first bilateral agreements reached between the two parties.

The sources said that in the previous round of talks in Washington, the Israelis, Palestinians, and Jordanians agreed that their next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 7 January. Therefore, the sources said, one cannot draw a comparison—as the Palestinians sources did yesterday—between their possible late arrival for the talks this week and the Israeli Government decision not to accept the unilateral U.S. invitation last month. The sources said that if indeed the Palestinians do not show up for the opening of the talks on Tuesday, it will be a bad sign in terms of their adherence to bilateral agreements in the future.

The sources further stressed that the delegation to the negotiations with the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, headed by Cabinet Secretary Elyaqim Rubinstein, already has a mandate today to negotiate autonomy. They added that Wednesday's inner cabinet session is supposed to approve changes in the Israeli stand on autonomy and not the delegation's authority to negotiate it. [passage omitted]

Minister Olmert on Peace Talks, Deportations

TA0501185892 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Interview with Health Minister Ehud Olmert by Shlomo Ganor on 5 January; place not given—recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Text] [Ganor] Good evening to you, Minister Olmert. The Israeli delegation is leaving for Washington this evening, while the various Arab delegations are boycotting this round of talks. What should we then expect from this round of negotiations in Washington?

[Olmert] Well, I assume that the Arab delegations will arrive eventually, even if this takes another day or two. We already have seen that talks begin even after a delay of one or two days. I am optimistic that we finally will be able to convince the Jordanian- Palestinian delegation to start serious negotiations. We definitely are aiming for this, and I hope such negotiations indeed will start.

[Ganor] Is it expected that the talks will move from the corridor to the room at this round of talks?

[Olmert] I very much hope that we will be able to leave the corridor and enter the room. There is no point in

wasting all this time, and I am surprised that the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation does not understand that it is in its interest that we end this interim stage.

[Ganor] This concerns the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. What about the talks with the other two delegations, the Syrian and Lebanese?

[Olmert] Look, right from the start I was less optimistic about the Syrians and Lebanese. We know the Syrian position, and I do not think it has changed. In fact, right from the start we conducted orderly negotiations with them, in the room and not in the corridor, and discussed various problems. Still, my impression is that the Syrian position is very uncompromising. They actually reject the basic condition, which is the objective of everything as far as Israel is concerned: The achievement of peace agreements. As far as the Syrians are concerned, UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 are, in fact, a mechanism created by the international community to guarantee the return of territories, not to make peace with Israel. I am quite skeptical that their position will change substantively in the coming days.

[Ganor] Will the upcoming round of talks deal with procedural matters or will we enter a discussion of substantive issues?

[Olmert] Well, we already entered a discussion of substantive issues with the Syrians, but there has been no significant progress at this stage. I hope that we will be able to enter substantive talks with the Jordanians and the Palestinians. There need not be a special problem here. We all understand that the first stage is that of autonomy. If there is agreement on this matter, why should we not start these negotiations at once? This does not involve territorial demands, so that I do not see a reason why we cannot reach an agreement.

[Ganor] Tehiya and Moledet have announced that they will withdraw from the coalition if and when we enter the autonomy subject in the upcoming round of talks.

[Olmert] Both Tehiya and Moledet knew what they were in for when they entered the coalition. They knew the Israeli Government's position. I do not believe that it is now possible to disavow the commitment the government made on autonomy surely being one of the subjects of the negotiations.

[Ganor] Their withdrawal could reduce the coalition majority.

[Olmert] Yes. This indeed is possible, and the outcome may not be desirable. Still, I believe that adherence to our basic position in this case is more important than the coalition's stability.

[Ganor] Would you say that the present government's days are numbered, that it is about to end its term?

[Olmert] Look, the present government's days have been said to be numbered so many times that....[Olmert changes thought] In reality, governments in a shaky condition have proven to be more stable than governments which have no problems. I would suggest that we exercise patience.

[Ganor] Minister Olmert, one of the reasons for the Arab delegations' refusal to arrive in Washington is the Israeli Government's decision to deport 12 PLO activists. The question is whether the timing of this decision was good, whether this does not delay the peace process?

[Olmert] Look, the point of timing actually is marginal. Timing always is said to be bad. Can you tell me when we ever had good timing? Whenever we took strong measures against intifadah leaders who are responsible for murderous terrorist acts—did anybody ever say the timing was good? Timing always was said to be bad, and why? Because the problem is not the timing, but the substance. There is opposition to the very fact that we use this deportation tool. There is no choice though, in my opinion. We do not like to do so. This is not a natural or desirable thing that we are eager to do. Still, reality sometimes dictates that we adopt strong measures.

[Ganor] We will do so despite international pressure and the anticipated UN Security Council resolution tomorrow?

[Olmert] Look, the fact is that the international community is not able to prevent the killing of Jews, so that somebody must shoulder the responsibility and do something about it.

[Ganor] Is a revision of the government's decision likely?

[Olmert] No, I do not think so.

Names of Prospective Deportees Disclosed

TA0301180392 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] The persons slated for deportation are: Ghassan Muhammad Jarar, Hasan 'Abdallah Sha'ban, 'Ali Faris Khatib, and 'Umar Nimr al-Safi from Ramallah; Iyad Jawdah from al-Birah; Ihab Muhammad al-Ashqar and Marwan Hasan 'Afanah from Gaza; Rif'at 'Uthman Najar and Ahmad Muhammad Hamdan from Khan Yunus; Ahmad Hasan Abu-Sayf from Dayr al-Balah; Sami Abu-Samhadani from Rafah; and Khadr 'Atiyya Khadr from Jabalyah refugee camp.

Legal Team Formed for Appeal

TA0301190692 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] The Bar Association in the Gaza Strip has formed a special judicial team, headed by attorney Furayh Abu-Middyan, to defend eight Gaza Strip residents whom the security authorities have decided to deport for engaging in hostile activity. This team has turned down a request by the Military Advocate General in the Gaza Strip to appear before the Southern Command Appeals

Court at noon on Sunday to present the counterargument against the deportations. Attorney Furayh Abu-Middyan told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that the team needs more time to prepare the counterargument and that he will ask the Appeals Court not to hold its meetings behind closed doors.

In another development, attorney Jawad Bulus has said that similar preparations are underway to form a judicial team in the West Bank to defend four of its residents whom the authorities have decided to deport and that the lawyers in this team will meet tomorrow to coordinate on this matter.

Appeal Submitted 5 Jan

TA0501203592 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Excerpts] The 12 prospective deportees today submitted an appeal against the intention to expel them from Israel. Our legal affairs correspondent Shlomo Arad reports that tomorrow three military committees will convene to discuss the appeals submitted to them: Two committees will hold a simultaneous discussion in Gaza, while the third one will hold a discussion at the al-Zahiriyah jail. The five prospective deportees jailed in the al-Zahiriyah jail have announced that they intend to step up the hunger strike they began today in protest against the conditions of their detention. Our correspondent in the territories Amir Hay reports:

[Begin recording] [passage omitted] One of the speakers at today's news conference, called by relatives of the prospective deportees, was the wife of Ra'uf 'Udda, a member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] who was issued a deportation order. He was placed under administrative detention for 10 days. The other prospective deportees are: Hasan 'Abdallah Sha'ban, a resident of Ramallah and a member of the PFLP; Muhammad 'Afanah, 34, a Fatah member and former administrative detainee; Ahmad Nimr, 53, a Khan Yunus resident and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] member; Sami Abu-'Atiyyah, 30, a Rafah resident and Fatah member—five of his brothers were killed in the intifadah; Ahmad Hasan Abu-Sayf, 36, a Fatah member and a resident of Dayr al-Balah in the Gaza Strip; Haydar (Mahjaz), 40, a resident of the Jabalyah refugee camp and Hamas member; Rif'at Najar, 47, a Khan Yunus resident and PFLP member. Additional prospective deportees whose pictures could not be obtained and screened include: 'Ali Hasan Khatib, 31; 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Safi, 43; Muhammad (Asajir), 34; and 'Ali Faris Khatib, 31.

All prospective deportees are accused of commanding the Palestinian organizations' networks in the territories. The attorneys in the territories set up a jurists' committee to defend the deportees. Palestinian sources say a strong argument is under way among the attorneys regarding whether or not to appeal to the High Court of Justice after the process in the appeals committees is completed, in view of past precedents. [passage omitted] Riyad al-Maliki and 'Ali Abu-Hilal, who are opposed to the political process, today joined the members of the Palestinian delegation, and, together with the families of the prospective deportees, met with foreign consuls in Jerusalem. The question is whether the deportation orders will torpedo the political process. Al-Husayni believes that only tomorrow, following the UN Security Council session on the deportations issue, will a decision be made on the continuation of the talks. It is clear, though, that the Palestinians will not arrive in Washington on 7 January. [end recording]

Relatives Call News Conference

TA0501115892 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Report by Udi Segal]

[Text] A news conference was called this morning by relatives of prospective deportees from Judaea and Samaria. The meeting of five families at the National Palace Hotel had been organized by activists identified with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, such as Dr. Riyad al-Maliki. The meeting was also attended by Palestinian delegates Faysal al-Husayni and Hanan 'Ashrawi.

Faysal al-Husayni said the Palestinians are satisfied with the worldwide condemnation of Defense Minister Arens' decision to expel 12 activists from the territories, although he pointed out that they are still awaiting the UN Security Council resolutions. In the meantime, the Palestinians are staying home—the flooded Allenby Bridge being an additional reason. Al-Husayni said it was as yet unclear whether the Palestinian delegation would leave for Washington.

[Begin al-Husayni recording, broadcast in progress] Perhaps they will be there; they may possibly wait there. A party waiting in vain in Washington would not be unprecedented. [end recording]

The Palestinians may leave for Washington in a few days. During today's meeting, several relatives of deportees made offensive remarks directed at Hanan 'Ashrawi and the delegation. They demanded that the peace process be stopped.

Participants of the meeting were openly given an appendix to Leaflet 88 of the Unified National Leadership of the Intifadah, calling on the Palestinians to condemn the deportations and to escalate the intifadah.

Shamir Comments on Deportation Decision

TA0301200192 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1805 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by political correspondent Gadi Sukenik, on 3 January in the Prime Minister's Office—recorded]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Sir, you and the defense minister decided to deport 12 Palestinian activists from the territories. Do you not fear that this decision, made now on the eve of the renewal of the peace talks, might bring accusations against Israel?

[Shamir] We must protect our security at all times. We must always fight terror, peace negotiations or not. To a great extent, the peace negotiations must bring about the end of terror. If some people murder others, steps must be taken against them. Unfortunately, here in Israel there are many such incidents, and we must act against them.

[Sukenik] Would it not have been wiser to perhaps postpone the decision by a few days, for the sake of appearances at least?

[Shamir] When such incidents recur, you cannot postpone things; we must retaliate. I believe that everyone in the world will understand that Israel is doing this only when we cannot take it anymore.

[Sukenik] As we speak, the Palestinian delegation is considering, and has perhaps already decided, to postpone its departure for Washington, and it is not known for how long. What do you think?

[Shamir] I need not tell them what to decide. They determine the paths they take according to their own consideration, not ours. We are going to Washington. We will hold peace negotiations there just as we decided. We decided to pursue the peace process for as long as we can, until we reach our aim—peace.

Shamir Discusses Deportations With Mubarak

TA0401172292 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Egypt's President Husni Mubarak this evening called Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir and asked him to nullify the decision to deport the 12 Palestinians to avoid damaging continuation of the peace process.

Our political correspondent Arye Golan reports that the prime minister told President Mubarak that the 12 prospective deportees may appeal to the Israeli courts in a bid to get the decision revoked. Mr. Shamir stressed that we cannot refrain from responding to murders that were committed on the eve of the Madrid conference, on the eve of the Washington talks, and now again before another round of peace talks.

Ministers on Deportations; Cabinet Backs Decision

Arens on 'Severity' of 'Problem'

TA0301183392 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by Dani Levi on 3 January—recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Text] [Levi] Mr. Minister, is not the decision to deport the 12 Palestinians too harsh, and was it not made with the wrong timing?

[Arens] No decision is easy. At the same time, we must understand the challenge we are facing. There are several terror gangs that, over the past few weeks, have been trying to murder people traveling on the roads. We must put an end to this. We will use all necessary means to do just that.

[Levi] The deportation penalty has not been implemented since January 1991, even if it has been considered on more than one occasion. Why now?

[Arens] I have just stressed the severity of the problem with which we are dealing and to which we must find a solution. That is why we have to use all means we regard as effective. The deportation of instigators—of people who belong to those gangs which are responsible, which often even take pride in their responsibility for such acts—is an important part of our means.

[Levi] Have the candidates for deportation had any direct connection with the recent murders in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza?

[Arens] Certainly. They belong to organizations that favor murder and terror acts.

[Levi] Could this decision reduce the level of violence in the territories, in your opinion?

[Arens] I believe this is one of the effective means—I would even say one of the most effective means.

[Levi] Sir, a claim has been made that the decision to deport the 12 was made, among other things, to appease the settlers. Is that so?

[Arens] If, as a result of this decision, those who travel on the roads of this country feel safer, I am pleased. The purpose of this decision, however, was to take steps against the murders.

[Levi] Mr. Minister, the United States this morning condemned the decision. Did the Americans ask us to reconsider?

[Arens] We know that the U.S. Administration does not favor deportations, but we have explained to them, more than once, that when dealing with terror acts, we are obligated to take all the steps we see fit.

[Levi] Do you expect massive U.S. pressure on Israel to change the decision?

[Arens] I do not anticipate massive U.S. pressure because there is no doubt in my mind that the Americans know that no amount of pressure would help.

[Levi] How do you view the decision of the Palestinian delegation to postpone their departure for the Washington talks?

[Arens] I believe that anyone who is interested in peace with Israel knows that such murders cannot assist the peace process. Some of the organizations, such as Habash's and Hawatimah's men, are declaring loud and clear that they are committing these acts of murder to block the peace process, to torpedo it. Also, there are Fatah men, such as Bassam Abu-Sharif, 'Arafat's adviser, who only recently said that terror acts must be exacerbated. Those men allegedly support the peace process, but in fact they believe that it has to be accompanied by murders. Therefore, if the Palestinian delegation is indeed interested in peace, it has to express its reservation from and opposition to such acts and to support every step we take that aims at putting an end to such murders.

[Levi] Could this decision not disrupt the peace process?

[Arens] If they stick to their decision, it would be the best sign that they do not resent such terror acts and that perhaps they are not really interested in peace. I want to believe they are.

[Levi] In any event, will our delegation go to Washington as planned?

[Arens] Yes, of course.

[Levi] Mr. Arens, thank you.

[Arens] Thank you.

Army General, Minister Ne'eman Comment

TA0301152592 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] Brigadier General Freddy Zakh, deputy coordinator of government activities in the territories, has said that the deportation of the 12 residents of the territories could indirectly serve the peace process. He explained that by saying that the process has a chance to succeed if terror diminishes. Brig. Gen. Zakh called on those supporting the peace process to support the steps taken by the administration and the deportation of the 12 Palestinian activists. Our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that Brig. Gen. Zakh believes that it is possible that in the short run, there might be a rise in street violence in the territories, but the deportations will have an effect in the long run.

Minister Yuval Ne'eman said that the deportations were made too late and are too little. He believes that in the current stage of the intifadah, other types of punishment must be employed; he did not elaborate. Our correspondent Arye Golan reports that Minister Ne'eman was speaking to settlers from the Gaza Strip.

Cabinet Supports Decision

TA0501122792

[Editorial Report] Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 1100 GMT on 5 January on 1992 reports that today's cabinet meeting discussed the expulsion of the 12 Palestinians. "Defense Minister Moshe Arens reported on the decision and the circumstances under which it was taken, and it was broadly supported in the cabinet. Minister Yuval Ne'eman said that the expelling of 12 Palestinians doesn't go nearly far enough. He was in favor of expelling several hundred. He said that if you expel a small number, as he put it, then it has an immunizing effect; they get used to it, he said, and it loses its effect. He also criticized the government, the Defense Ministry, for evacuating the Jewish settlers who set up a new settlement in the Gaza Strip in memory of Doron Shorshan, who was murdered. This was also criticized by Minister Rehav'am Ze'evi. Defense Minister Moshe Arens said that this settlement was unauthorized, and this was why the government had decided to remove it."

Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1005 GMT on 5 January interviews Minister Rehav'am Ze'evi as he leaves the cabinet meeting. Asked whether he will resign from the government if the inner cabinet decides to authorize the Israeli delegation to the Washington talks to propose autonomy to the Palestinians in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, Ze'evi replies: "If that is indeed the decision of the inner cabinet, there will be two less ministers in the government and five less Knesset members in the coalition," alluding to Moledet and Tehiya. Ze'evi goes on to say: "It will not be us who will topple the government, but those who bring the autonomy plan up for discussion and decision." Ze'evi says that it is not the right-wing parties' fault that "someone at Camp David came up with the harebrained idea of autonomy for the Palestinians." Ze'evi asserts that the plan "will not resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict, but only establish a PLO-dominated Palestinian state in the heart of Eretz Yisra'el." He vows that Moledet and Tehiya "will not lend their hand and votes to such a move," and "if this is not clearly understood, there will not be a government." Ze'evi adds: "I have said this to Shamir many times, and I sent him yet another message this morning, stating that Tehiya and Moledet will neither support, nor be part of, a government that instructs its delegates to discuss autonomy."

Defense Ministry Defends Policy

TA0501203992 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] It was announced by the Defense Ministry this evening that the danger to the political process lies in the terrorist acts taking place before every round of political talks. The Arab countries that are party to the negotiations do not condemn terror, and even grant it protection. If the Arabs want the peace process to succeed, they should condemn terror and support the defense establishment's effort to deter terrorists from committing additional murders. In the opinion of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the other security elements, deportations are an effective tool in the antiterror campaign. This is the Defense Ministry's statement.

Parties, Russian Envoy React to Deportations

NRP, Other MK's Comment

TA0301140192 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Excerpt] The National Religious Party [NRP] welcomes the decision to deport the 12 Palestinians. Political Secretary Sha'ul Yahalom reported the NRP reaction.

Knesset members [MK's] Ran Kohen and Dedi Zucker of the Citizens Rights Movement call on the defense minister to reconsider the decision.

MK Ge'ula Kohen of Tehiya said that the remarks by Faysal al- Husayni and Hanan 'Ashrawi that they are suspending the talks until they receive instructions from the PLO are tantamount to officially admitting that they are acting on behalf of the organization. [passage omitted]

Labor Leaders Criticize Decision

TA0501155292 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Labor Party leaders are leveling criticism at the decision to deport 12 Palestinian activists from the territories, saying the decision is an attempt to please the settlers.

In a meeting with students in Ramat Gan, Knesset member [MK] Shim'on Peres said the timing of the decision on deportations is unfortunate, especially since it has come during the week when Israel intends to renew its request for U.S. guarantees.

MK Yitzhaq Rabin says that in the past, as defense minister, he used the deportation tool, but the time elapsed between the decision and the actual deportation made it clear to him that this is not an effective penalty. Those who do not see a political solution to the conflict with the Arabs do not have a correct order of priorities, Rabin said. Rabin spoke with army affairs correspondents in Tel Aviv.

Russian Envoy Criticizes Decision

TA0501124392 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Excerpt] Russia's ambassador to Israel says the decision to deport 12 Palestinians is a mistake. It was the latest in a series of reactions from around the world against the expulsion orders. David Ze'ev reports:

The Russian ambassador, Aleksandr Bovin, spoke to Qol Yisra'el this morning. While on a tour of Bar Ilan University, he said the time is not appropriate for this kind of steps. He said the deportation orders are bound to reduce the amount of goodwill and cooperation of the Arabs with Israel. He called the Israeli Government move an extreme one, at a time of searching for compromises. Extreme moves of this sort, the Russian ambassador said, disturb and do not contribute to this process. [passage omitted]

Shamir Briefs Cardinal O'Connor on Peace Talks

TA0601112992 Jerusalem GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE in English 5 Jan 92

[Communication issued by the prime minister's media adviser]

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir met today (Sunday), 5.1.92, with Cardinal O'Connor from New York. The cardinal thanked the prime minister for the possibility of meeting him and pointed out that he came as a friend of Israel and a friend of the Jewish community in the U.S. He added that the meeting with the prime minister in his office, symbolized, in his opinion, the warming of the relationship with the Vatican and that he personally works to improve these relations, which in themselves would benefit Israel, the Middle East and the Vatican.

The prime minister expressed his hope that the Jewish-Christian dialogue will deepen and that normal relations will be established between Israel and the Vatican, since the existence of Israel is a fact and that the Holy See is aware of this reality.

During his conversation, the prime minister gave details, at his guest's request, on developments of the peace process and emphasized Israel's commitment to the progress of the process and expressed his appreciation for the central role of the U.S. in the advancement of the negotiations.

The prime minister clarified to Cardinal O'Connor the reasons for Israel's decision to expel 12 Palestinians as [Israel's] duty to act against all those causing the nurturing and encouragement of terror and violence. Mr. Shamir expressed his hope that acts of terror will cease and that Israel will be able to concentrate on the improvement of the Palestinians' living conditions, in which the effort is already now apparent in Jerusalem and throughout Israel, to give freedom of worship to all religions.

Ne'eman on Tehiya Position on Quitting Coalition

TA0601064092 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] The Israeli delegation to the Washington talks is currently on its way to the U.S. capital. The Moledet faction, headed by Minister Ze'evi, yesterday informed the prime minister that if the issue of autonomy is discussed in Washington, Moledet will resign from the government. Yuval Ne'eman, minister of energy and infrastructure and of science and technology, from the Tehiya faction, told Elihu Ben-On, the editor of this program, that the Tehiya will resign if autonomy is discussed.

[Begin recording] [Ne'eman] We already declared several months ago that if the negotiations taking place in Washington or at any other location actually touch on substantive issues—in other words, the issue of

autonomy for the Palestinians and territorial issues with regard to the Syrians—then we will have to leave the government at that time.

[Ben-On] Are Moledet and Tehiya of one mind on this issue?

[Ne'eman] We are coordinated.

[Ben-On] What is your timetable?

[Ne'eman] The question is: When will they reach this stage? We had requested holding a debate on the autonomy plan in the hope that we could persuade our colleagues in the cabinet that this is an extremely dangerous proposal and convince them to abandon the plan. Practically speaking, however, we knew when we joined the government that the Camp David accords and the autonomy plan appeared in its basic guidelines. Both Tehiya and Moledet have a letter of reservations on this issue. We can live with this as long as these ideas are not actually being implemented.

[Ben-On] Professor Ne'eman, what do you expect from the Israeli delegation that is on its way to Washington?

[Ne'eman] I think it still has to get through quite a complex stage of moving the talks from the corridor into the room. They also have problems with their timetable. I would like this delegation to ultimately tell the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation: Gentlemen, you have a Palestinian state in Jordan; the border is the Jordanian border, and that is all there is to it.

[Ben-On] Did the prime minister receive your message?

[Ne'eman] The prime minister has known for quite some time that we will not be able to continue to belong to the government if substantive issues are discussed. [end recording]

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0600 GMT on 6 January adds that "Minister Ze'evi's assertion that Tehiya and Moledet will resign from the coalition in the middle of this week if the inner cabinet discusses autonomy in the territories came after the right-wing parties received information that the Israeli delegation to the talks is going to discuss autonomy with the Palestinians immediately after concluding the procedural issues; however, Energy Minister Yuval Ne'eman, the chairman of the Tehiya, said after Ze'evi's statements that the uproar was unnecessary and that there has actually been no change in the positions of the two parties, which have already clarified several times in the past that they would resign when practical discussions on autonomy in the territories began." Ne'eman said "he has no objection to the inner cabinet discussing the autonomy plan in its next session."]

Commentary Sees Decline of Likud Party

TA0301124992 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 3 Jan 92 p B1

[Commentary by Yo'el Marcus: "The Likud Can, Too"]

[Excerpts] This disgusting week, during which the state's coffers were cynically ransacked, may herald the beginning of the end of the Likud's rule. We can start forgetting about the election slogan "Only the Likud Can" and start thinking in terms of "the Likud can, too." It can fall. Lose power. Go home.

There is no ironclad rule about how long a ruling party in a democratic country should be in power before it starts losing its grip, but a period of 10 to 15 years is often considered a good "stretch." Nevertheless, usually it is not the number of years in power that turns the voters against the party, but the point where the party stops functioning and becomes decadent, where the fine line between the good of the country and the good of the party becomes blurred, where it is unclear which is subject to which, which precedes which, and what precedes what. Yitzhaq Shamir's remarks in an interview with Dan Shilon that "what is good for the Likud is identical with what is good for the country, and what is good for the Likud is good for Israel and vice versa" made my hair stand on end, because the moment a leader says "the country is me," it leads me to believe that the "me" comes first. That is how decadence sets in.

Shamir's words constitute a milestone. They confirm the adage that power corrupts and that absolute power corrupts absolutely. His position about the affinity between the good of the country and the good of the Likud was the theoretical basis behind what happened in the Knesset this week. The Likud treated the state's coffers as if they were its own. Hundreds of millions (some say that with the "settlement payoffs" it came to over 1 billion) were funneled to whom it may concern just so the Likud would not lose power. Do not tell me that this has always been the case; there has never been such a nadir. Never before has the good of the party taken precedence over the good of the country to such a degree, in such a shameless fashion. At the lowest of their lows, MAPAI [Israel Workers Party] leaders had the interests of the country at heart, even when they committed unconstitutional actions. At most, one could say that en route to building the country, the party was not left out in the cold.

What happened this week was good for the Likud but bad for the country. To his credit, one might say that Shamir did not take a self-righteous position or play the martyr, but gave it to us straight: "We must win, and it makes no difference how this victory is attained." The moment a ruling party stops caring about the means it will have to use to remain in power constitutes a turning point that in a normal country would signal the beginning of the party's downfall.

In his book *Political Parties*, the French political scientist Maurice Duverger describes the fall of ruling parties: A popular party will not last long if, in the course of its term in power, it does not befriend or enjoy the sympathy of the elite. The Likud's behavior fits Duverger's theory. It rose to power as a Robin Hood (as Knesset Member Shevah Weiss once said), as the representative of all the needy and downtrodden people who were fed up with the nepotism and corruption of the ruling aristocracy. After tasting the sweet fruits of power, however, the Likud gradually began to resemble the party it had unseated.

The Likud did not befriend the country's elite—writers, scientists, intellectuals, members of kibbutzim and moshavim, and so forth. As a result, it remained a populist and opportunistic party. Moshe Dayan and the DCM [Democratic Movement for Change, established in 1977], who were part of the country's elite and during whose brief time in government Israel scored its most brilliant achievements, ultimately failed to find a common language with the Likud. It is no coincidence that the professional elite—from the Shin Bet through the Army, from the judicial system through professional staffers in the Treasury and the Foreign Ministry—are not sure that the Likud puts the good of the country ahead of partisan interests, and they are very worried.

The Likud learned the tricks of the previous regime, but reached a degree of decadence that its predecessor did not even dream of: Khomeynization of the country, favoritism, political appointments, politicization of state apparatuses, nepotism, and what not. What else can we say after the finance minister himself declared that "the budget is based on political considerations and has nothing to do with the economy?" [passage omitted]

This week, after years during which all of us stuck to the belief that the Likud is here to stay, maybe, just maybe, a situation has been created for the first time whereby the omnipotent Likud can also fall.

Moda'i on Budget, U.S. Loan Guarantees

TA0501175092 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Finance Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i says that this year's budget deviation stands at only 180 million shekels, which is the lowest budget deviation in recent years.

In an interview with our economic affairs correspondent Menahem Friedman, Yitzhaq Moda'i refers to the loan guarantees Israel has requested, saying that there is no reason for the U.S. Administration to take advantage of the domestic budget controversy. Minister Moda'i estimates that if Washington decides against the guarantees, Israel will have to raise loans at higher rates, which will unavoidably affect the Israeli economy.

Possibility of New Taxes Not Ruled Out

TA0501204592 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Finance Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i does not rule out the possibility of imposing new taxes or raising the rates of existing ones if the United States does not grant Israel the aliyah absorption guarantees. Our correspondent 'Oded Shahar reports that at a meeting with economic affairs reporters Minister Moda'i said that increased budgets for construction in the territories will not work in Israel's favor in the discussion on its request for guarantees. He added that the Americans are not sympathetic to this, but this is the Israeli Government's policy and it will be implemented. The finance minister disclosed he had agreed to increase the budgets for construction in the territories after consultations with the prime minister.

Budget Allocations for Settlements Detailed

TA0201111792 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 2 Jan 92 pp 1, 8

[Report by Avi Temkin]

[Excerpt] Applying steamroller methods at the Knesset Finance Committee yesterday, the coalition managed to pass about 300 million shekels for settlements, the acquisition of houses in Silwan, and special allocations for the ultra-Orthodox community. In addition, the committee approved the treasury's compromise proposal for a partial repeal of accelerated depreciation in agriculture, tourism, and industry and a total repeal of the regulation exempting immigrants from tax on new automobiles.

The appropriations approved by the committee include the following:

—West Bank roads: The sum of 35 million shekels, earmarked for paving 17 connecting roads in settlements, was transferred from general reserves. Knesset Member Hayim Oron said the cost of these roads is much higher, and Gush Emunim will undoubtedly start the construction at once, intending to demand additional budgets later in the fiscal year. In addition, another 26 million shekels were allocated for security roads.

—Silwan: The original budget submitted to the Knesset features a clause entitled Apartment Purchases (Acquisition Assets) for Needy Families and Immigrants From Ethiopia. Under pressure from Gush Emunim and right-wing parties, the second part of the title, earmarking funds for needy families, was dropped. As a result, the committee was able to divert the approximately 48-million-shekel budget under this clause to the purchase of buildings in East Jerusalem, particularly Silwan.

—Settlements: According to an agreement between Finance Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i and Tehiya, some 28 million shekels will be directed to local councils of settlements in the territories. An additional 40 million

has been allocated for what was termed new settlement, and another 5 million shekels for established settlements. In addition, the settlers received 17 million shekels in grants, as well as 21 million shekels to be given as preferential-terms loans to individuals seeking to establish residence in settlements.

—"Ultra-Orthodox culture": The Knesset Finance Committee allocated 55 million shekels to the ultra-Orthodox community's culture budget managed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] received an extra 16 million shekels for its educational institutions. [passage omitted]

Levi, Italian Opposition Leader Discuss Peace Process

TA0301093692 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 3 Jan 92 p A9

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar and Yosi Torpstein]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Foreign Minister David Levi yesterday told Giorgio la Malfa, head of the opposition Italian Republican Party, that he hopes for progress despite the difficulties in the peace negotiations. Levi said he foresees difficulties in the talks with Syria, but noted that "Israel is patient" and that "the alternative to negotiations is very bad."

The foreign minister asserted that Israel is offering the Palestinians something that nobody has offered them before. He said that Israel abides by the agreements set prior to the peace talks and insists that the Palestinians should proceed likewise. Levi added that the negotiations with the Lebanese are being conducted in a good atmosphere and that Israel is only interested in the security of its citizens and has no territorial designs on Lebanon. Levi voiced his satisfaction with Italy's contribution to the repeal of the UN resolution equating Zionism with racism. [passage omitted]

Diplomatic, Internal Appointments Noted

TA0201145192 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 2 Jan 92 p A1

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Excerpts] In view of Turkey's decision last week to upgrade its relations with Israel to the ambassadorial level, the Foreign Ministry's Appointments Committee yesterday decided to recommend that the cabinet appoint Uri Gordon, the charge d'affaires in Ankara, as the first Israeli ambassador to Turkey.

Jerusalem attaches great importance to the establishment of high-level relations with Turkey, because it is a neighboring Muslim country with important water resources that could help develop the countries of the region. [passage omitted]

Dr. Yehuda Lankry (a member of the Levi camp in the Likud, chairman of Israel Television's Channel 2, and mayor of Shelomi) will become the next Israeli ambassador to France, once the cabinet accepts the recommendation of the Foreign Ministry's Appointments Committee.

The 44-year-old Lankry was born in Morocco, and holds a Ph.D. in French literature from the Sorbonne. He began his political career in MAPAM [United Workers Party] and gained celebrity when he donated a kidney to save his son. Lankry will replace Dr. 'Ovadya Sofer, who has been Israel's ambassador to France since 1983. [passage omitted]

The Appointments Committee endorsed Minister David Levi's proposal to appoint Eytan Bentzur as the Foreign Ministry's deputy director general. Bentzur, who in the last few years has been the ministry's assistant director general in charge of the North America and Disarmament Affairs Division, is also Elyaqim Rubinstein's substitute as head of the Israeli delegation to the talks with the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. [passage omitted]

Dr. Ya'aqov Kohen will be Israel's ambassador to Spain instead of Shlomo Ben-'Ami. In the last few years, Kohen has been the Foreign Ministry's assistant director general in charge of economic affairs. Among other things, he took part in the preparations for the Expo 1992 fair, which will take place in Spain. Kohen has been ambassador to Japan and Venezuela and deputy director general of the Industry and Trade Ministry.

Ya'ir Ben-Shalom, a staffer in the ministry's economic department, has been appointed consul general in Istanbul.

Nahum Eshkol, the ambassador to Japan, has been appointed Israel's first nonresident ambassador to Mongolia.

Intelligence Branch Chief on Nuclear Arms, Syria

TA0301121492 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 3 Jan 92 pp 10, 11

[Interview with Brigadier General Oren Shahor, chief of the Intelligence Branch, by Avi Bnayahu; in Tel Aviv on 30 December]

[Excerpts] [Bnayahu] On 1 January, the USSR was officially liquidated. The Western world is worried about the tactical and strategic nuclear weapons stationed in four different republics. How does the Intelligence Branch view the impact of this situation on the Middle East and Israel?

[Shahor] As a superpower, the USSR traditionally supported Arab countries, such as Syria. Syria's longtime ambition to achieve strategic parity was based, among other factors, on that superpower support, which no longer exists. In terms of the possibility of an armed conflict with an Arab country, such as Syria, I would say the impact of the weakening, disintegration, and metamorphosis of the USSR into a sort of commonwealth is a relief.

[Bnayahu] Will the weapon supply lines from the former USSR vanish or will weapons sales grow via the republics?

[Shahor] We must not forget that the Arab armies' main supply of weapons comes from Eastern Europe. The disintegration of the former USSR will be significant in the future with regard to spare parts, advisers, and supplies. On the other hand, the market is opening up, and the worse the cash shortage is, the easier it becomes to procure warfare materiel. All of Eastern Europe is naturally short of money, and this influences the arms market. In the current process, it will be increasingly easier to secure weapons, technology, and information. In general, the impact is negative for the Arabs, who have East European weapons. They are aware of it, but there is nothing they can do.

[Bnayahu] And what about the nuclear aspect? Is there room for the apprehension voiced by Western leaders?

[Shahor] The nuclear issue threatens the entire world and not any one particular region. Our attitude to it is one of fear and awe, and justly so. The Americans are equally right in being more concerned by the issue of nuclear arms control than the economic and other important issues. Irresponsible control of the briefcase with the codes can play havoc with the world.

My impression is that the message from Yeltsin and the leaders of the other republics is mature and responsible and that they seem to be saying: Relax, people, we are dealing with the issue seriously; President Yeltsin will keep the briefcase and control everything connected with nuclear weapons. This is how it looks, but there is no way to know how things will develop. At the moment, as they have told the Americans, they appear to have a responsible approach. [passage omitted]

[Bnayahu] Has Kazakhstan, with its nuclear weapons, become a superpower and a target for Israeli intelligence? Do such weapons make rulers or countries into superpowers in the eyes of other countries?

[Shahor] Nowadays, there is only one genuine superpower in the world, one that behaves like a superpower: the United States. Although the United States has been the leader for many years now, the traditional balance between the United States and what used to be the USSR has been upset more than ever. Being a superpower takes more than nuclear weapons; there is also economy, industry, and the ability to produce results.

[Bnayahu] In the short and medium run, is the disintegration of the Soviet Union good or bad for the Jews?

[Shahor] Everything is at the embryonic stage just now, but I can discern some possibilities for us in terms of our enemies' loss of a superpower's support and of a steady supply of weapons, the U.S. ability to influence these countries, and so forth. In my view, there are numerous possibilities. [passage omitted]

[Bnayahu] Has the Intelligence Branch invested more effort in Iraq in the wake of the Gulf war and Iraq's desire to rebuild its Army and damaged infrastructure?

[Shahor] As part of the lessons we learned from the war, we are naturally focusing more on peripheral states today. Missiles make distant countries more threatening. It is necessary to deploy intelligence infrastructures. It is not easy, but this is the challenge with which we have been tasked. The peripheral countries, including Iraq and Iran, are serious targets. [passage omitted]

[Bnayahu] When will Israel have a surveillance satellite? The defense minister promised one within two years.

[Shahor] I will not discuss timetable details, but we are speaking about the next few years. It is a long-range process involving advanced technologies. The satellite is a real thing, its development was given priority, and it will grant us an ability we did not have in the past to view, assess, and, in time, to alert. The surveillance satellite is not a magic wand, but in my opinion, it is very important for every sphere for which the Intelligence Branch is responsible. The more we are faced with nonconventional means, the greater the satellite's significance. I regard it as something that will place Israeli intelligence in a higher class. I am saying this as an Israeli: The satellite is of supreme importance. With us, it has high priority. [passage omitted]

[Bnayahu] Can you assert that today we posses the intelligence capability to know more about Iraq than we did a year ago?

[Shahor] Definitely, undoubtedly. Our capability to cope and to know is better. It is the result of our continued buildup in this sphere. [passage omitted]

[Bnayahu] Is Saddam capable of rebuilding Iraq despite the still-valid embargo?

[Shahor] In my opinion, the answer in the long range is yes. The embargo has not proved itself; it has encumbered Saddam, but contrary to expectations, it has not smothered him.

[Bnayahu] What is the state of the Iraqi nuclear infrastructure?

[Shahor] Part of it has been exposed, but not everything, I think; exposing everything will take many more years. It should be remembered that Iraq possesses know-how which cannot be obliterated, and various capabilities it has achieved; the potential will be there for a long time.

[Bnayahu] Israel's nearest and most immediate remaining enemy is Syria, which is now sitting down to peace negotiations with us. What is the Intelligence Branch's evaluation of the potential situation, if the peace talks fail? Is there still danger of a Syrian military move in the present reality?

[Shahor] The annual intelligence assessment says there is little likelihood of a war with Syria in the foreseeable

future. This is based on the existence of a peace process, peace debates, the absence of Soviet support, and so forth. In parallel, we have noted that from year to year, the Syrian Army becomes more quality conscious.

All in all, it should be clear that although the Syrians are involved in the peace process, they have not abandoned their ambition to attain strategic parity. They are interested in the peace dialogue and, as an intelligence body, we have to be ready for changes.

In my opinion, Syria is interested in negotiations, but the possibility that the peace talks or the entire political process will break up is potentially dangerous, because this outcome is liable to take Syria back to its unchanging traditional stand.

I think al-Asad is a very pragmatic leader with an unchanging and quite balanced way of thinking. With al-Asad, the emotional aspects are low on the scale of importance, while rational considerations are very high. Syria aims to regain the Golan Heights; this is the Syrian motivation in the negotiations.

[Bnayahu] There has recently been increasing concern about the growing Iranian threat and Iran's desire to acquire nuclear weapons. To what extent is Iran an intelligence target?

[Shahor] The Iranians strive to attain nuclear arms with the aid of China. They believe that the Muslim world should have an answer to what they think Israel has, and they want to get it in the coming decade. The Iranian perception of our existence is very radical, as they have openly declared. In addition, the Gulf war has taught them the importance of missiles, and they are trying to acquire a 1,000-km-range missile. We definitely view Iran as a danger, beginning with its support for the Hizballah-perpetrated terrorist attacks from Lebanon down to international terrorist activities in general.

At present, Iran seems potentially dangerous, and we have presented the situation as such. Iran is a central target, to which we have accorded very high priority. [passage omitted]

[Bnayahu] In the wake of the latest operation in Lebanon, the volume of our intelligence data about Lebanon and our ability to obtain information about Hizballah activities have again been questioned. How does the Intelligence Branch cope with this matter?

[Shahor] Quite a few activities, as well as continuing military operations, are carried out in Lebanon. Intelligence is a complex issue, because Lebanon is a complex country. There is a flow of intelligence in various directions, there is a lot of disinformation and compartmentation in Hizballah; in addition, they are well acquainted with the terrain. All this affects our activities, but we are coping. Our objective is to reach worthwhile targets, and we are aware of the problems I have mentioned. The judgment that a target is indeed a target involves a lot of energy, and it does not always work. We try to have accurate information, however, and occasionally we admit we do not know. This, too, is sometimes important.

[Bnayahu] Was the most recent operation, in which three Lebanese were kidnapped, conducted for intelligence purposes?

[Shahor] The answer is: not only for intelligence purposes. As the chief of staff has explained, the objective was both to gather information and to show presence. I can state unequivocally that there was no misidentification, nor was there any failure. The media reports on this event were a canard, and for that reason, the chief of staff backed the intelligence personnel, for which I am most appreciative.

[Bnayahu] Has the Intelligence Corps anything to say about the timing of this kind of operation? The question comes in connection with the UN secretary general's statement that the operation had damaged his efforts toward the release of hostages.

[Shahor] The Intelligence Branch has a part in almost everything, and occasionally in the timing as well. I think the operations in Lebanon should be viewed as an ongoing activity. When such activity, which can be neither stopped nor decreased, takes place, the intelligence sector is a full partner.

[Bnayahu] Can you say that, without any doubt, the timing of the operation has done no damage?

[Shahor] My impression is that it was okay, including everything connected to the timing and performance.

[Bnayahu] It has been five years since Ron Arad and his plane went down in southern Lebanon. Lebanon is a neighboring country, in which no reconnaissance satellites and so forth are needed. Is not the failure to ascertain Roan Arad's place of captivity and condition for five years an intelligence fiasco?

[Shahor] This issue is incomparably sensitive. For that reason, my answer also requires caution. I can say that there is high awareness of the issue, and there is no limit to the resources and effort which we are prepared to invest in promoting a solution. I would not like to address your question specifically, because it may be harmful.

[Bnayahu] In the last year we have seen significant intelligence activity in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. How is this activity expressed?

[Shahor] Intelligence cannot only deal with strategy and not provide assistance on the issue of the intifadah. It begins with field intelligence, processed in the General Staff, which creates field files, target files, and so on. We have a deployment of special observation posts that assist the forces in the field and makes a significant contribution in selecting and locating quality targets—meaning capturing people with blood on their hands—and in providing additional assistance in terms of the forces' sophistication. We are doing this in cooperation with the Shin Bet, to which we send noncommissioned

operations officers to simplify the cooperation methods. I would like to take this opportunity to compliment our men in the territories and the Shin Bet. This is a group of people doing a very important job.

[Bnayahu] What means are being used in the territories?

[Shahor] We use various cameras, day and night observations, television cameras and binoculars for various ranges, surveillance balloons, and other means.

[Bnayahu] Speaking of the territories, a remark made by a senior intelligence figure not so long ago comes to mind, that too much is being invested in surveilling PLO men around the world, so that sometimes we miss the important things. The whole intelligence community is being brought up on this order of priorities. Is it not a mistake?

[Shahor] The intifadah made us change our perceptions of certain issues and make the appropriate modifications.

Surveillance of terror elements does not come at the expense of anything else. Preventing spectacular terror acts is a major target. The terrorists are aware of the fact that we have a sensitive soft belly. We have to monitor this and do it, and it does not come from not doing something else.

When we speak of political activity, leadership and people change, and each period has its own typical characteristics. Speaking of terrorism, this is often more complicated; often it is like searching for a needle in a haystack. For this we need sophistication, initiative, and professionalism.

[Bnayahu] Things have already been said about the challenge the intelligence community now faces in locating attempts to infiltrate agents into it using the massive immigration from the USSR. How does the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] field security, of which you are in charge, deal with this?

[Shahor] As far as our activity is concerned, this issue is highly sensitive. All I can say is that we are working in cooperation with the Shin Bet. The Shin Bet has a great responsibility, and our Field Security Department joins in when it is needed on all that concerns the IDF. We are aware of the issue and deal with it quite extensively. The issues concerned are delicate and sensitive, so we better keep silent. [passage omitted]

[Bnayahu] Is the Intelligence Branch [IB] today an IDF arm, with all that this means?

[Shahor] The IB and the Intelligence Corps [IC] are one and the same. We are in a process of assuming the status of an arm in terms of resources and manpower. Currently, we are reexamining the structure of the IB and the IC, the control span of which is very complex.

[Bnayahu] In your time, battlefield intelligence has undergone a real revolution. What are its main characteristics?

[Shahor] We are doing this with the Ground Corps Command. In terms of target intelligence, we are in a process of making a substantive change which would bring an updated intelligence picture in real time to the battlefield. The issue of introducing the unmanned air platform to the units is making progress. The Americans have also identified this means to be important, as a lesson they have learned from the Gulf war. [passage omitted]

Delegation Postpones Washington Departure

Israeli Deportations Prompt Delay

JN0401181392 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 4 Jan 91

[Text] A responsible source at the Foreign Ministry has stated the following:

In light of the recent developments that have resulted from Israel's decision to deport 12 Palestinian citizens from their homeland, thus defying international legitimacy represented by the Geneva agreement and UN resolutions, and the Arab and international desire for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East, the Jordanian Government has decided to postpone the travel of its delegation to Washington until further notice.

'Technical Reasons' Cited

JN0401133892 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Randah Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Text] The Jordanian delegation has postponed its departure to Washington to tomorrow, Sunday for technical reasons. This was announced by Jordanian delegation head Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali. The Jordanian delegation was scheduled to leave for Washington at dawn today. Al-Majali said that all the members of the Jordanian delegation will be present in Washington before the start of the third round of bilateral negotiations on Tuesday. The advisory members and the members of the press committee left for Washington yesterday.

The Jordanians decided not to wait for the Palestinian side in the joint delegation. The Palestinian side had postponed its departure to Washington in protest against Israel's decision to deport 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories.

Palestinian sources in Amman believe that the Palestinian delegation cannot ignore the Israeli provocations and leave for Washington if it wants to avoid popular anger in the occupied territories.

It has been learned from an informed source that Jordan has voiced its displeasure because the Palestinian side has taken its step and informed it about it without prior coordination with it. The two sides of the delegation were scheduled to leave from Amman on board the same plane.

It has also been learned that PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat phoned Jordanian Prime Minister Zayd Bin-Shakir to brief him on the PLO's stand on the recurrent Israeli provocations. The source cites 'Arafat telling Bin-Shakir that the Palestinian side cannot ignore the obstacles Israel places in front of the peace process. 'Arafat said that the Arab countries should adopt a firm stand on what he described as Israel's serious violations.

Jordan, which vehemently denounced the deportation decision, believes that the Arabs should not be dragged behind Israel's attempts to obstruct the peace process by making the Arab side withdraw from it.

'Arafat Arrives in Amman, Notes Israeli 'Obstacles'

JN0501182392 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Excerpts] State of Palestine president Mr. Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Amman this afternoon on a visit to Jordan to promote intra-Arab coordination ahead of the third round of bilateral talks with Israel. [passage omitted]

In a statement to our political affairs correspondent Salim 'Ali Dhiyab, Mr. 'Arafat said:

[Begin 'Arafat recording] There are important issues to do with the peace process: the obstacles created by the Israeli Government, settlers, and the Knesset in terms of their decision to expel struggler Palestinian cadres, Arens' decision to arm settlers and give them the status of national guards, and the decision passed by the Knesset devoting 25 percent of the housing budget to the construction of new settlements in our occupied land in the West Bank and Gaza, not to mention Jerusalem. All these are clear indications of an Israeli determination to obstruct peace and torpedo the peace process. Naturally, we will have an in-depth discussion concerning all of these items with his majesty the king and brother officials in the Jordanian leadership, considering that we are a joint delegation and that ours is a joint march and the fact that we share common pains and aspirations. [end recording]

King, 'Arafat Discuss Peace Process

JN0501210792 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Excerpt] At al-Nadwah Palace this evening, His Majesty King Husayn received his excellency president Yasir 'Arafat of the state of Palestine and his delegation. They reviewed current developments with a special emphasis on the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory. They also assessed the progress of the peace process in the light of recent developments, and exchanged views about the various aspects of the peace process. The meeting was attended by his excellency the prime minister, the chief of the Royal Court, and other top officials. [passage omitted]

Prime Minister Receives PLO's Qaddumi

JN0501142792 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] His Excellency al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, the prime minister, today received Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department. Dhuqan al-Hindawi, deputy prime minister and education minister; Foreign Minister Kamil Abu-Jabir; and Ibrahim 'Izz-al-Din, minister of state for cabinet affairs, attended. On the Palestinian side, the meeting was attended by PLO

Executive Committee members Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, Sulayman al-Najjab, and Yasir 'Amr, as well as al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, ambassador of the state of Palestine in Amman.

They discussed the outcome of Qaddumi's visit to Damascus which fell within the framework of Arab efforts in the peace process. These efforts seek a unified Arab position, especially in the light of the Israeli intransigence, which was embodied recently in the decision to deport 12 Palestinians from their homeland in a clear violation of the international law and the Fourth Geneva Convention.

During the meeting, they discussed the means to mobilize an effective world stand to face Israeli intransigence which causes unnecessary complications in the peace process and obstructs the march for a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

They also discussed means for joint cooperation and coordination to prepare for the third phase, the multilateral regional talks scheduled to convene at the end of this month in Moscow.

House, PNC Speakers Denounce Deportations

JN0401175992 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1515 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Amman, 4 Jan (PETRA)—House of Representatives Speaker 'Abd-al-Latif 'Arabiyat said that the decision adopted two days ago by Israeli occupation authorities to deport 12 Palestinian citizens demonstrates the Israeli enemy's determination to expand and not give any of the Palestinian or Arab rights to their rightful owners. In a statement to PETRA, 'Arabiyat added that the Israeli occupation authorities are continuing to implement their plan to expel the original inhabitants by various means, noting that we should expect more of these measures.

'Arabiyat said: This measure was to be expected from Israel, which did not miss any opportunity to announce that it does not commit itself to any of the Palestinian and Arab demands, such as stopping settlement building, withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, recognition of the PLO, and allowing the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

Dr. 'Arabiyat called for serious work and for preparing what is required to confront the cancerous Israeli danger through useful means, saying that the resolutions of international organizations are completely incapable of confronting Zionist ambitions. He emphasized that self-reliance, closing ranks, and unification of efforts are the only ways to fulfill our national duty toward our nation and cause.

For his part, Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih, speaker of the Palestine National Council [PNC], said that the Israeli occupation authorities' deportation of 12 Palestinian citizens provides clear evidence of these authorities' disdain for UN charters, laws, and resolutions, demonstrating that they are not serious in their call for peace. Al-Sa'ih said that the international community should condemn them and force them to bring all deportees back to their homeland. The United States, he said, should stop providing them with moral and material support, and should force them to submit to the will of the international community and legitimacy because their actions have a negative impact on the peace process.

Editorial Urges U.S. Stand on Deportation Issue

JN0401120392 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 4 Jan 92 p 1

[Editorial: "The Palestinian Deportations and the Budget of Settlements and Settlers"]

[Text] The decision by the Israeli occupation authorities to deport 12 Palestinian citizens from their homeland and the land of their fathers and grandfathers has reconfirmed the Israeli rulers' intentions to abort the peace process. To pass his government's budget, Yitzhaq Shamir resorted to the lowest means of prevarications and maneuvers with the representatives of the religious and rightwing parties, and gave in to their demands to increase allocations for settlements and religious schools. Several Israeli leaders denounced and were indignant at these methods, describing the adoption of the budget as a "dirty operation" during which underhanded and suspect dealings were concluded. This made Hayim Herzog say: "This is a bad operation and had I had the power to dissolve the Knesset, I would have done so".

Following this operation, which has enhanced the settlement process, encouraged the settlers, and established false Torah teachings in the religious schools, Yitzahq Shamir and his ruling Likud clique had to fabricate an issue to obscure the "scandal" budget. Thence came the decision to deport the Palestinians from their land on the eve of the peace negotiations in Washington without paying any attention to the peace process, or to the UN and Security Council resolutions, and the international organizations which condemned the deportation and viewed it as a racist act which conflicts with the Geneva Conventions and all international conventions and laws.

Therefore, we view Jordan's denunciation of this unjust measure—expressed by Foreign Minister Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir who described it as being a provocative act and a hurdle on the road to peace, and by Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, head of the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, who described this measure as being an act of provocation that will sabotage the peace efforts—as being the expression of a frank and explicit stand by Jordan which has always affirmed that it adopts a positive approach to the peace process. Israel, however, is the one that does not want peace and does not wish the efforts exerted to succeed.

The announcement by the Palestinian delegation that it has postponed its departure for the bilateral talks can be justified because it is illogical for the Israeli Knesset to pass a budget to establish settlements in the occupied

territories and for the occupation authorities to expel Palestinians from their houses, cities, and villages while the Palestinians remain silent as if nothing has taken place.

What will the Palestinians negotiate with Israel, if not the land which is being planted with settlements and for whose expansion funds are being allocated? The Palestinians are also negotiating the right to repatriation on which Israel is bent on reneging and from which from time to time it deports Palestinian citizens.

The international community, and in particular the United States, which is the sponsor of the peace talks, should assume its responsibility and firmly declare its position on what is taking place. Otherwise, what is the meaning of international legitimacy, human rights, and the people's right to self-determination and other slogans that the leader of the world boasts about day and night?

There also should be a courageous and explicit Arab stand that will dot the i's so that we may not wander or find ourselves turning in a vicious circle.

United Stand on Talks Boosts Palestinian Position

JN0501111192 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 5 Jan 91 p 1

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Lamis K. Andoni]

[Excerpt] Amman—The Jordanian, Syrian, and Lebanese decision not to leave for Washington for the next round of Arab-Israeli talks in protest to Israel's decision to expel 12 Palestinians from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip is expected to boost the Palestinian position.

The unified position of the Arab parties, which responded to a request from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), is expected to reinforce Palestinian demands for a meeting for the United Nations Security Council to discuss the Israeli measures.

Although Arab and Palestinian officials have indicated that there was no decision, or even an intention, to boycott the next round of the bilateral talks, the Arab parties seem determined to build international pressure on Israel to halt its crackdown on the Palestinians under its occupation.

Arab and Palestinian sources indicated that the Arabs will reconsider their position if there were international steps taken to pressure Israel to rescind its expulsion order and to provide some form of international protection for the Palestinians under occupation.

Arab official statements implied that the Arab participation in Washington talks will mainly hinge on the Palestinian decision.

As one Jordanian official explained, it was the only option since the absence of any Arab party will undermine the very objective that the Arabs are seeking to attain—i.e. a comprehensive solution for the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"It is a very simple formula," explained a Jordanian official. "The aim is to reach a comprehensive settlement. If one party is jeopardised from participating then the other parties cannot attend without undermining this objective."

Well-informed political observers said that the Arab parties involved were a bit disconcerted by the fact that the Palestinian decision was made prior to consultations with the other Arabs involved.

Nevertheless the stance taken by the Arab parties involved in the peace talks represented the closest coordination reached since the beginning of the peace process in Madrid last October.

According to political analysts, the unified Arab stand was largely due to the firm and determined position called upon by the Palestinian negotiators who echo public opinion in the occupied territories.

"The Palestinians in the occupied territories have emerged as a unifying factor of the Arab position—at least in the peace process," said one analyst.

In more than one way the Arab position, which took the lead from the Palestinian insistence to postpone the trip, has once again underscored the centrality of the Palestinian issue—a point that Arabs felt that Israel was trying to subdue during the first round of the bilateral talks in Washington last month.

PLO sources in Tunis and in Amman did not hide their earlier concerns that they have to secure sufficient Arab support and not be blamed for disrupting the peace process.

PLO officials said that their position was boosted by the Arab position and that they hoped that the Security Council will meet soon.

There were earlier reports that the PLO was considering a compromise but the Palestinian leaders in the occupied territories reported to the headquarters in Tunis that it was almost impossible for the delegation to budge without achieving a concrete result.

"The PLO cannot risk jeopardising the popular backing of the Palestinian delegation," said one official. [passage omitted]

Delegation Postpones Departure; Solidarity Cited

NC0401174392 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1717 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Interview with Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz by an unidentified Voice of Lebanon correspondent on 4 January; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Buwayz] Lebanon is taking part in these talks from the standpoint and idea of Arab solidarity. There are a number of Arab states and sides that have decided not to participate in the talks on 7 January. In addition to that, Lebanon cannot be the initiator of splitting up the Arab ranks. Therefore, we have postponed the departure of the delegation scheduled for tomorrow.

[Correspondent] Have you informed the U.S. side of this postponement?

[Buwayz] We will inform the U.S. side within the next few hours.

Buwayz on Damascus Talks, Peace Negotiations

NC0601091592 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Interview with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz by unidentified Radio Free Lebanon correspondent; date, place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Mr. Buwayz, you have been in Damascus. Can you brief us on some of the results of your talks there regarding the next round of peace talks?

[Buwayz] It was natural that we consult with Syria on the eve of the third round of talks. We always consult with each other on these issues because Lebanon joined the peace conference on the basis of Arab solidarity, especially in connection with Resolution 242, which deals with occupied Arab territories.

Solidarity is the foundation of the Arab stand and as such is a constant, vital necessity. Lebanon welcomes the unanimous Arab stand on the Palestinian deportation issue. Lebanon believes that the Arab states must adopt their own stand and not be restrained by any circumstances or event that Israel chooses to exploit.

The talks were serious and completely frank. Right now we are discussing the third round of talks and pinning down a date for this round.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, do you think the next round of talks in Washington will be delayed?

[Buwayz] I do not think so. We had to adopt a principled stand after what Israel did, but this stand cannot obstruct the work of the conference, especially since the United States, through its strongly worded statement condemning the Israeli decision and through its positive stand in raising the issue at the Security Council, proved its credibility. We hope the United States will continue to vigorously pursue its policy of honoring the commitments it made in the letters of assurances it sent me.

[Correspondent] In your view, the negotiations could (?resume) in a week?

[Buwayz] I do not believe the negotiations will be delayed for long.

[Correspondent] What about the multilateral talks?

[Buwayz] Our stand on the multilateral talks is clear. We have often said that entering into the multilateral negotiations depends on progress in the bilateral talks and that it would be unreasonable and illogical for us to start the multilateral negotiations before firm broad lines for peace in the region are charted. Before we embark on any serious step, Israel must affirm its intention to withdraw from occupied Arab territories. In light of this, we will adopt the appropriate stand on these negotiations.

[Correspondent] Thank you, Mr. Minister.

Buwayz Confers With Syria's Khaddam, U.S. Envoy

NC0501074492 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] According to informed sources, contacts were held yesterday between Foreign Minister Buwayz and [Syrian Vice President] Khaddam, whose trip to Beirut has been delayed due to weather conditions. The discussion dealt with the general situation in Lebanon.

Contacts were also held between Buwayz and U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Ryan Crocker, who insisted that Lebanon must attend the third phase of the bilateral negotiations scheduled for 7 January. Lebanon stated that it must remain committed to Arab solidarity. The Palestinians took Lebanon's side in Madrid so Lebanon should take their side today.

The sources say that the atmosphere suggests that the negotiations will resume sometime between 7 and 13 January. The sources cite the U.S. side as saying that, should practical progress be made in Washington, there will be no U.S. objection to shifting the talks to a location near the Middle East.

Fatah's Abu-Salim Reportedly Killed in Sidon

NC0501150192 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1450 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Our correspondent in Sidon has reported that a gunman this afternoon assassinated Lieutenant Colonel Husayn Sulayman, better known as Abu-Salim, an official in Fatah's Force-17, while he was coming out of his home in the al-Iskandarani quarter of Sidon. He received two shots that killed him instantly. His body was taken to the Hammud hospital.

Israeli Shelling, Troop Concentrations Reported

NC0501064192 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Israel has escalated its acts of aggression against the south. At 2100 yesterday, the occupation artillery shelled Zawtar al-Sharqiyah and Zawtar al-Gharbiyah, the fringes of Kafr Tibnit, and the al-Nabatiyah al-Fawqa area from its positions on (al-Tahir) and al-Dabshah hills. At the same time troops were massing on the Bra'shit and Shaqra axes.

Al-Shar', PLO's Qaddumi Review Peace Process

JN0301211492 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' this evening received Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department; Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh and Shafiq al-Hut, members of the PLO Executive Committee; and Nimr Hammad, the PLO representative in Rome.

The meeting was attended by Assistant Foreign Minister Yusuf Shakkur; Ambassador Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, head of the Syrian delegation to the bilateral talks; and Majid Abu-Salih, Syria's ambassador in Amman.

During the meeting, the conferees assessed developments in the peace process, the bilateral talks, and coordination vis-a-vis the future stages of the peace process. The conferees also discussed the provocative Israeli acts aimed at torpedoing the peace process.

Further Talks Held 4 Jan

JN0401154192 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1520 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Damascus, 4 Jan (SANA)—Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and PLO Political Department Chief Faruq Qaddumi resumed their talks this morning. PLO Executive Committee members Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh and Shafiq al-Hut, as well as the PLO representative in Rome, Nimr Hammad, attended.

On the Syrian side, the talks were attended by Assistant Foreign Minister Yusuf Shakkur; Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, head of the Syrian delegation to the bilateral talks; and Majid Abu-Salih, Syria's ambassador in Amman.

During the talks, the two sides completed their discussion of the issues raised in yesterday's session. Particular emphasis was laid on Israeli practices against the Palestinian people and Israel's defiance of the world community's will, as demonstrated by its attempts to sabotage the peace process.

Delegation Delays Departure To Protest Expulsions

JN0401154692 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1540 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Damascus, 4 Jan (SANA)—A responsible source has stated the following: In solidarity with the Palestinian people and in denunciation of the Israeli Government's decision to deport 12 Palestinians from the occupied Arab territories, it has been decided to postpone the departure of the Syrian delegation, which was scheduled to leave for Washington today to resume peace talks.

'Arafat, Delegation Arrive in Damascus

JN0601100092 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0952 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] Damascus, 6 Jan (SANA)—Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, and his delegation arrived in Damascus this morning.

He was received at Damascus International Airport by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam.

The delegation accompanying 'Arafat comprises Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department; and PLO Executive Committee members 'Abdallah Hurani, Yasir 'Amr, and Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh.

Meets President al-Asad

JN0601141892 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received PLO Executive Committe Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and a PLO delegation, including Faruq Qaddumi, Shafiq al-Hut, Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, Yasir 'Amr, and 'Abdallah Hurani, at 1245 today. Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam attended the meeting.

Paper: U.S. 'Not Interested' in Peace Process

JN0401101192 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0850 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Damascus, 4 Jan (SANA)—In an editorial entitled "Feigned Skillfulness in Playing the Time Card," the newspaper AL-THAWRAH today says: When we entered into the peace process with confidence and sincerity, we did not have even a grain of illusion that Israel could accept any formula for peace except one which would entrench its occupation of the Arab territories and through which it can expropriate all Arab rights.

The paper adds: The peace process was a rare opportunity to put Israel to a real test before the world, which was deceived by it for half a century, and to enable the world to discover for the first time by itself the real nature of Israel which, until recently, was thought to be a helpless entity targeted by the Arabs.

The paper asserts that the Arabs did not go to Madrid and Washington to drown themselves in immaterial wrangles that are distant from the resolutions of international legitimacy and, specifically, Resolutions 242 and 338.

The paper adds: In its attempt to gain time and to procrastinate, Israel seeks to push the U.S. Administration to the critical moment when Bush and his administration have to make difficult decisions on the eve of the presidential elections in the light of the well-known role that the Zionist lobby plays in these elections. Through that role, Israel seeks to curb any firm U.S. decision on peace or to apply pressure on Israel to activate the peace talks.

The paper says: We and the rest of the world have begun to feel that the United States is not interested in peace now, is not concerned about what goes on in Washington, and turns a blind eye to what Israel is doing in the occupied territories and in the peace talks. It seems as if the U.S. is no longer interested. Or, let us say, it may withdraw from the commitments and guarantees it has made concerning the peace process, despite the fact that if peace is achieved on the basis of international legitimacy and its resolutions, new international accolades will go to Bush, his administration, and his party. He will also gain a "victory," which is no less glamorous than what he achieved through the sweeping changes in the world.

The paper wonders: Will the United States persist in this indifference and submission to Zionist extortion. What is happening now, and what Israel is doing—rejecting, showing intransigence, and defying the United States and the world—no longer arouses any reaction from the U.S. Administration. So, can the peace process reach a fair and just end if this is the case?

AL-THAWRAH concludes by saying: He who tries to show skill in playing the time card will find that time is not in his favor irrespective of possibilities and repercussions, and irrespective of the situation that will emerge as a result of such sweeping international changes.

Lebanon's Buwayz Arrives in Damascus 5 Jan

JN0501135992 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Lebanese Foreign and Expatriates Affairs Minister Faris Buwayz arrived in Damascus at 1130 today. He was received at the Damascus western entrance by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', Assistant Foreign Minister Yusuf Shakkur, and senior Ministry officials.

In a statement to a SANA correspondent, Buwayz said: I have come for consultations with the Syrian brothers on the latest developments regarding the peace conference, the intransigent Israeli positions, and the hostile acts recently carried out by Israel.

Buwayz added: Lebanon is fully committed to Arab solidarity. Indeed, it champions this solidarity, especially with fraternal Syria. Hence, we have postponed the departure of our delegation for Washington to attend the next round of talks there in a show of solidarity with the Palestinian brothers and in denunciation of the hostile Israeli practices.

Buwayz went on to say that he will discuss these issues with Faruq al-Shar' to coordinate the two countries' positions on the Middle East peace process.

Discusses Israeli 'Provocations'

JN0501153092 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Damascus—Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' this morning received Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz. The meeting was attended by Yusuf Shakkur, assistant foreign minister; Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, head of the Syrian negotiating team to the bilateral talks; and Albert 'Asi, director of Lebanon's Bureau in Damascus.

They comprehensively assessed developments in the peace process and consulted on future developments in view of the Israeli provocations that seek to sabotage the peace efforts.

They also discussed bilateral relations and cooperation between the foreign ministries of the two fraternal countries.

Afghanistan

Najibollah Offers To Step Down for Zaher Shah

BK0501091692 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 5 Jan 92 p 1

[Bureau report]

[Text] Peshawar, Jan 4—The Kabul regime President Dr Najibollah had reportedly offered to quit provided former King Zaher Shah was accepted by all the Resistance groups as an agreed replacement.

Afghan sources, quoting the HIA [Hezb-e Eslami Afghanistan] chief Engineer Golbuddin Hekmatyar, however, added that the resistance had turned down the proposal saying "Dr Najib and Zaher Shah both are highly controversial persons and therefore none of them is acceptable."

The proposal had been conveyed to the Afghan Resistance by the senior officials of the Pakistan Government.

Hekmatyar was also quoted as saying "the Americans after the collapse of Communism, now want to combat the Islamic forces particularly in the Middle East and South Asia. They are hypocrites, he added. [no closing quotation marks as received]

Mojahedin Release U.S. Hostage De Hart

BK0501083092 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Afghan mojahedin handed over U.S. hostage Joel de Hart to the U.S. consul in Peshawar yesterday. Hart, who hails from the U.S. state of New Jersey, was captured by Afghan mojahedin in Ghazni Province six months ago. Speaking on this topic, the U.S. consul commended the efforts made by a group of mojahedin to secure the release of the U.S. hostage on humanitarian grounds.

Brigade Commander, 85 Soldiers Surrender

LD0301171792 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] The commander of the 53d Artillery Brigade of the Kabul regime's army, together with 85 men under his command, surrendered to Afghanistan's Muslim mojahedin in Afghanistan's Jowzjan Province.

A source connected to the mojahedin announced this and added that more than 50 Kabul regime soldiers were killed in battles during the past two days in the provinces of Faryab, Qor [name as heard], and Herat.

Bangladesh

Easing of Tension Along Border With Burma Sought

BK0301160892 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] Myanmar [Burma] is ready to take (?moves) to defuse tension along the border with Bangladesh. Stating this, a Foreign Office spokesman said in Dhaka today Myanmar has also expressed its willingness to work in cooperation with Bangladesh for restoring peace along the common border. The spokesman said that Myanmar's position on the border issue was explained by its ambassador, Soe Myint, to Foreign Minister A.S.M. Mustafizur Rahman when the envoy called on him this morning. The ambassador returned to Dhaka from Rangoon after consultations with his government on the current problems between the two countries.

Mr. Soe Myint conveyed to the foreign minister his government's warm sentiments and goodwill for Bangladesh, the spokesman said. Mr. Mustafizur Rahman told the envoy of Dhaka's concern and anxiety over the buildup of troops by Myanmar along the Bangladesh border following the attack on a Bangladesh border post on 21 December. He particularly called for resumption of the flag meeting between the two countries and urged the other side to make such meetings a regular practice to ensure a peaceful border.

The foreign minister pointed to the recent violation of Bangladesh airspace by Myanmar aircraft and expressed the hope that such things would not recur.

Three Border Stations Reopened

BK0301131892 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] Bangladesh is waiting for a reply from Myanmar regarding holding of the second flag meeting at Teknaf on Tuesday next. The first flag meeting was held at Maung Daw on Tuesday last to find out ways and means to defuse tension along the 176-mile common border of the two countries. Both sides decided that the second flag meeting will be held in seven to 10 days. Accordingly, Bangladesh Thursday proposed for the meeting in writing.

Meanwhile, three transit points on Bangladesh-Myanmar border at Teknaf have been reopened. These points (Mila), Teknaf, and Gundun were closed down by Myanmar on the 22d of last month following [word indistinct] raid on Rezupara BDR [Bangladesh Rifles] camp killing one jawan [soldier], injuring seven others, and looting arms and ammunitions.

Influx of Burmese Muslims Continues

BK0601093092 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0130 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] Influx of Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar to Bangladesh continues unabated. BSS says over 100 Rohingya Muslims entered Bangladesh yesterday

through (Mila), (Laikhamsharif), Gundum, and (Tugru) borders. The refugees, including men, women, and children, have taken shelter at Marichiya camp in Kushtia. It said the Myanmar Army and police were abducting and torturing people indiscriminately under false (?charge) of their involvement with the Rohingya Muslims. It also says more than 9,000 Rohingya youth were arrested in (Aminghov), Buthidaung, and Akyab during the past one month. Most of them were taken to unknown destination. [Words indistinct] were killed.

Meanwhile, several thousands of Rohingya Muslims now staying at different country's camps in (Kushiyab) and the Rawal upazilas [subdistricts] of Cox's Bazar are facing acute shortage of food and winter clothes. Two voluntary organizations have so far distributed some winter clothes and [words indistinct] among the Rohingya Muslim refugees. But, these are quite insufficient to meet the requirements of all. The refugees who crossed into Bangladesh yesterday also said there has been heavy concentration of Myanmar troops along the border with Bangladesh.

The Myanmar Government has not yet responded to the proposed second flag meeting at Teknaf.

Government Recognizes Russia, 10 CIS Republics

BK0301130292 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Bangladesh today accorded formal recognition to Russia and 10 other members of the new Commonwealth of Independent States. Bangladesh also welcomed the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

A Foreign Office spokesman said in Dhaka that the decision has been conveyed separately to the goverments of each of the republics through their (?representation) in Moscow. The republics are Azerbaijan, Byelorussia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Moldovia, Russian Federation, Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, and Ukraine. The spokesman also said the government looks forward to mutually beneficial relations between Bangladesh and each of the 11 newly independent republics.

India

Reportage on Visit of UK Official Baker

Spokesman Previews Visit

BK0101021492 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 1544 GMT 31 Dec 91

["Visit of the secretary of state for home department, UK, Mr. Kenneth Baker; official spokesman statement dated 30th Dec 91"]

[Text] While briefing newsmen, the spokesman announced the forthcoming visit of Mr. Kenneth Baker, secretary of state for Home Department UK, from 2-7 Jan 1992. The spokesman elaborated that Mr. Baker will be having substantive discussions with the minister for home affairs, Mr. S.B. Chavan, and will also be calling on the prime minister as well as the external affairs minister. Mr. Baker will be the chief speaker at a function at the India International Center, where he will talk on race relations, terrorism, and crime. Mr. Baker will also be visiting Bombay for two days, i.e. on 5th and 6th Jan, before he departs.

The spokesman clarified that the talks of the British home secretary with Indian leaders will be focusing on a number of issues which are of importance to both Britain and India. The spokesman further elaborated that there has been a most satisfactory cooperation between the two countries in tackling anti-Indian terrorism launched by subversive and militant groups based in the UK. It is a matter of satisfaction that in recent times the British Government has taken stern action against terrorists by launching prosecution; and by taking appropriate legal measures, including the issue of deportation orders. The British Government has reiterated, at the highest level, its willingness to continue and to strengthen this cooperation to combat the "evil of terrorism." Both countries have agreed that terrorism is a global issue and needs to be tackled on an international basis, through the cooperation of like-minded countries. The British Government has also, on more than one occasion, advised Pakistan to stop any support to terrorists working against India's interests. Mr. Baker has himself been most supportive ever since he became secretary of state, in November 1990. It is hoped that with Mr. Baker's continuing support and cooperation, India would be able to use his visit to move forward on the question of finalising the agreements for confiscation of terrorist funds and of drug traffickers.

The spokesman made a reference to the visit of a British team in Jan 1991 to discuss these specific issues. The spokesman elaborated that India hopes that after substantive discussions with Mr. Baker, an Indian team will travel to the United Kingdom in the early part of next year and sign the agreements. The spokesman also made a reference to the British Government's introduction of a charities bill, which deals with funding of charitable institutions, including gurudwaras [Sikh temples]. It is hoped that bill, along with the other measures mentioned earlier, would go a long way towards assisting both governments in their joint efforts to combat terrorism in its international dimensions.

The spokesman elaborated that India will also be seeking the support of Mr. Baker, and through him of the British Government, for enhanced cooperation between India and the European Community in order to deal with terrorists based in some of the member countries of the Community.

Baker Meets With Foreign Minister

BK0301162192 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] Britain has supported India on the question of human rights and its efforts to tackle terrorism. During

his meeting with the external affairs minister, Mr. Madhav Singh Solanki, in New Delhi today, the British home secretary, Mr. Kenneth Baker, said India and Britain, because of their open societies, have a difficult job to deal with terrorists' acts. He stressed that India should continue to refute the allegations about the alleged violation of human rights. He regretted that several human rights groups have not spoken against the violation of human rights of the victims of terrorists.

The British home secretary offered a new extradition treaty to India to bolster joint efforts to contain terrorism.

Mr. Solanki gave documentary evidence to prove the nexus between elements in Pakistan and their mentors in other countries, including Britain.

Responding to Mr. Solanki's observations, Mr. Baker said Islamabad has been told that it is not in the interest of the two countries to support terrorism.

A delegation will soon visit London to work out details of a proposed extradition agreement between India and Britain. This was decided during an hour-long meeting the visiting British home secretary, Mr. Kenneth Baker, had with the home minister, Mr. Chavan, in New Delhi. It was agreed that the two governments will exchange information to combat terrorism. They also discussed the modalities of a suitable exchange of information with a European privy group which deals with international terrorism. Mr. Chavan and Mr. Baker also discussed the question of confiscation of properties of the people involved in terrorism.

Meets Prime Minister

BK0401162492 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] India and Britain have underlined the need to further strengthen their bilateral cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism. During their meeting in New Delhi today, the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, and the visiting British home secretary, Mr. Kenneth Baker, felt that the proposed extradition treaty and the agreement on tracing, restraining, and confiscation of proceeds of crime and terrorist funds will make a substantial contribution in this regard. During their meeting, which lasted for about 40 minutes, Mr. Narasimha Rao said people talk about human rights violation but they should not forget the violation of human rights of the innocent victims of terrorist attacks. Mr. Baker fully concurred with Mr. Rao on these points.

On support to terrorists in India, Mr. Baker said the British Government and the European Community had made representation to Pakistan and would continue to do so. Mr. Baker referred to his talks with the external affairs minister and the home minister yesterday and said relations between the two countries had perhaps never been as warm and friendly as now at any time earlier.

Soviet Upheaval Halts Thermal Power Plant Project

BK0401080892 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] In Kerala, the work of the proposed 1,210-megawatt super thermal power project of the NTPC [National Thermal Power Corporation] at Kayankulam has come to a halt. According to senior officials of the NTPC, environmental reasons and the political upheaval in the former Soviet Union, which had agreed to share the cost of the project, are some of the hurdles. Five crore rupees have already been spent on preliminary work on the project.

Nepal & Bhutan

New Cabinet Minister Portfolios Announced

BK0301130192 Hong Kong AFP in English 1707 GMT 31 Dec 91

[Text] [No dateline as received] The allocation of the portfolios of the ministers is as follows:

Prime Minister and Minister of Royal Palace Affairs, Defence and Foreign Affairs - Girija Prasad Koirala.

Minister of Housing and Physical Planning - Bal Bahadur Rai.

Minister of Land Reform and Management - Jagannath Acharya.

Minister of Tourism - Ram Hari Joshi.

Minister of Agriculture - Shailaja Acharya.

Minister of Home Affairs - Sher Bahadur Deupa.

Minister of Local Development - Ram Chandra Paudley

Minister of General Administration, Law and Justice and Parliamentary Affairs - Maheswore Prasad Singh.

Minister of Works and Transport - Khum Bahadur Khadka.

Minister of Education, Culture and Social Welfare - Govinda Raj Joshi.

Minister of State (Health) - Dr. Ram Baran Yadav.

Minister of State (Finance) - Mahesh Acharya.

Minister of State (Commerce and Supplies) - Aishwory a Lal Pradhananga.

Minister of State (Industry and Labour) - Ramkrishna Tamrakar.

Minister of State (Forest and Environment) - Bir Mani Dhakal.

Minister of State (Communications) - Bijaya Kumar Gachchhadar.

Minister of State (Water Resources) - Laxman Prasad Ghimire.

Assistant Minister (Land Reforms and Management) - Siddha Raj Ojha.

Assistant Minister (General Administration, Law and Justice and Parliamentary Affairs) - Dinbandhu Aryal.

Assistant Minister (Works and Transport) - Shiva Raj Joshi.

Assistant Minister (Commerce and Supplies) - Surendra Prasad Chaudhari.

Assistant Minister (Education, Culture and Social Welfare) - Hasta Bahadur Malla.

Assistant Minister (Housing and Physical Planning) - Dilendra Prasad Badu.

Assistant Minister (Industry and Labour) Diwakar Man Sherchan.

Among the ten full ministers, only Govinda Raj Joshi was a new addition. Of the seven state ministers, five were new while Minister of State for Health Dr. Ram Baran Yadav and Minister of State for Finance Mahesh Acharya were retained.

Seven new assistant ministers were also added for the first time to the cabinet.

Koirala Government Launches Privatization Drive

BK0301100292 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] The Koirala government in Nepal has launched a drive for privatization of government-owned corporations following poor performance by most of the existing 62 undertakings.

Official reports from Kathmandu say the government has decided to privatize at least three such public sector undertakings initially. A 10-member, high-powered commission has been set up to recommend the priorities concerning the privatization of existing government undertakings.

Pakistan

Army Chief Holds Talks With Former Afghan King

BK0401154092 Hong Kong AFP in English 0952 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Islamabad, Jan 4 (AFP)—Former Afghan King Zaher Shah, exiled in Italy since his 1973 ouster, has held a meeting in Rome with Pakistan Army chief General Asif Nawaz, press reports here said Saturday.

The English-language daily THE NEWS said the meeting took place Thursday in the Italian capital and gave a boost to diplomatic efforts to resolve the Afghan war.

Moscow and Washington, which backed opposing sides in the conflict, agreed last year to stop arms shipments to the Kabul government and mojahedin guerrilla resistance as of January 1, 1992.

The Pakistan Army chief left here for the United States on Wednesday, and official sources said he was scheduled to visit Rome.

Islamabad, which has given shelter and support to the U.S.-backed mojahedin has refused recently to rule out the possibility that Zaher Shah might play a role in the peace process.

Pakistan has until now favored the fundamentalist guerrilla factions.

No comment from the Pakistani Government on the reports was immediately available.

A mojahedin official, who requested anonymity, dismissed reports from Rome that such a meeting had taken place.

"I hope it's not true," he told AFP, adding that it was "not in the interest of anyone" for the ousted monarch to play a role in resolving the 13-year-old Afghan war.

Zaher Shah, 77, ruled Afghanistan for 40 years until General Mohammad Da'ud seized power and abolished the monarchy in July 1973.

Some resistance factions have sought his return as head of a transitional government pending general elections.

Government Presses for Afghan Settlement

BK0501095592 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 5 Jan 92 p 1

[Article by Ashraf Hashmi]

[Text] Islamabad, Jan 4—The Chief of Army Staff [COAS] Gen Asif Nawaz's reported meeting with the former Afghan King Zaher Shah in Rome the other day has given a new dimension to Pakistan's efforts to achieve a political settlement of the 12-year old Afghan conflict. There is a growing realisation in Islamabad that the continuation of the Afghan problem is not in Pakistan's interest.

Official sources, who looked hopeful for a major initiative as a follow up of Gen Asif Nawaz's meeting with the former Afghan King, have termed the attitude of some of the Afghan leaders as most regrettable.

The Afghan leaders, they maintain, while acting in a most irresponsible manner have sabotaged the recent visit of the Vice President of the Russian Republic Mr A. Rutskoy by refusing to accede to his request for the release of some of the Rusian POWs and let down the top leaders of Pakistan, including the COAS, who had earlier made a firm commitment to the Russian Vice President that his request would be positively responded to.

The Russian Vice President, who expressed a keen desire for close relationship with Pakistan, desperately wanted to take back home at least three POWs, which could have strengthened his hands to persuade the Muscovitics for a fruitful economic and political relationship with Pakistan [Pak].

"We in face have missed an opportunity of a major breakthrough in Pak-Russian relations", commented a top level official in the Foreign Ministry. He regretted that the opportunity was missed because of narrow thinking on the part of our Afghan friends and their supporters in Pakistan.

The Army Chief, said an insider did his best to persuade the Afghan leaders to oblige the visiting Russian Vice President but they did not agree. Finally their adamant attitude caused an embarrassment to him when he met the Russian leader. We have to look for a new option, commented a Foreign Office source and General Asif Nawaz's meeting with Zaher Shah in Rome might pave the way to such an initiative.

Meanwhile officials in the Foreign Ministry continue to emphasise on an early solution to the Afghan issue, which they now think as a major hurdle in the development of relations with the newly born Central Asian republics. We want to take some benefits out of the developments taking place in central Asia and it is an additional reason for us to seek an early solution to the Afghan conflict" [no beginning quotation marks as published], commented Akram Zaki, Secretary General of foreign affairs.

He told The Muslim that Pakistan had decided to open at least three diplomatic missions in central Asia. These, he said, would be established in Tashkent, Dushanbe and Alma-Ata by July this year.

He said the President of Tajikistan Mr Karimov would soon pay an official visit to Islamabad and the dates of his visit were being finalised. Pakistan he said was keenly interested in Central Asia. In reply to a question the Secretary-General agreed that the emergence of independent states adjacent to Afghanistan has resulted in fundamental changes in the situation. Actually the Central Asian states are much closer to Kabul government on ideological basis than to the Mojahedin leaders.

The Russian Federation, he said, does not have a direct border with Afghanistan whereas these republics have rooted links with that country. He said naturally their opinion would carry weight while seeking a solution of the Afghan conflict Pakistan he said had invited all the heads of these states to visit Islamabad to know their position on the issue.

When asked to comment on the reported meeting of General Asif Nawaz with Zaher Shah, he said, he was not aware of the content of the meeting, but was confident that its results would be beneficial to the country.

Akram Zaki Comments on Indian Relations

BK0301154292 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] In an interview with the Voice of Germany, Akram Zaki, minister of state for foreign affairs, has said that the exchange of information between Pakistan and India on nuclear installations will not only reduce tension between the two countries but will increase mutual trust as well.

He made it clear that the Kashmir issue is still a major dispute between Pakistan and India, one which should be resoved through negotiations in order to promote bilateral cooperation. He said that Pakistan time and again has emphasized that good-neighborly relations between the two countries can only be established when a peaceful solution to the Kashmir issue is found.

Demonstrations Protest Indian Control of Kashmir

BK0501164892 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Right to Self-Determination Day was observed today throughout Azad Jammu and Kashmir [AJK], occupied Kashmir, and by Kashmiris living elsewhere. The day marked the passage of a UN resolution in 1949 guaranteeing to the Kashmiri people their right to self-determination. There were complete strikes throughout AJK and protest rallies and processions were taken out to invite world attention toward grave human rights violation by Indian forces in occupied Kashmir.

A big public rally was held in Muzaffarabad. Addressing the rally, the AJK prime minister, Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, expressed full solidarity with the people struggling for achieving their basic right to freedom. He said the freedom struggle in occupied Kashmir is totally an indigenous popular campaign which started in reaction to inhuman and oppressive policies of Indian rulers in the territory. Later, the AJK prime minister accompanied by the leaders of the Tehrik-i-Hurriat-i-Kashmir led the rally of thousands of people toward the UN observers' office and handed them a memorandum calling for a plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir. A big rally was also held at Kotli which was led by the AJK president, Sardar Sikander Hayat Khan.

Reports have also been pouring in of rallies and protest demonstrations held by Kashmiris living in Pakistan and their supporters. Kashmiris living in Rawalpindi and Islamabad took out a big procession and held a rally. Speakers urged the United Nations to fulfill its commitment to Kashmiri people.

A function was also organized by the Pakistan Muslim League [PML] to express solidarity with Kashmiri people and support their right of self-determination. Addressing the meeting, Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs Sardar Mehtab Ahmed Khan condemned inhuman atrocities being perpetrated by occupation forces on innocent Kashmiris. The secretary general of

PML, Mr. Iqbal Ahmad Khan, called upon the international community to exert pressure on India to let Kashmiri people exercise their right to self-determination. A number of resolutions were also passed by the meeting calling for an early plebiscite under UN supervision in Kashmir and allowing international human rights organizations to visit to occupied territory to see for themselves Indian atrocities against innocent Kashmiris. Rallies, functions, and public meetings were also held at Lahore, Peshawar, Hyderabad, and other places to mark the Right to Self-Determination Day.

Reports reaching from occupied Kashmir speak of complete strike today through the valley and Jammu to mark Self-Determination Day. Life remained at standstill as all vehicles remained off the road and business establishments kept their doors closed. Beefed-up security forces used force to prevent people from taking out processions in Srinagar and marching up to the UN observer mission for handing over protest memoranda. There are also reports of clashes between freedom fighters and Indian occupation forces in several areas.

The chairman of the British Parliament's human rights committee, Lord Eric Avery, has said Pakistan should raise afresh the Kashmir issue at the United Nations and its committees on human rights and decolonization. He was speaking at a reception given in his honor by the AJK prime minister in Muzaffarabad today. Also speaking on the occasion, the AJK prime minister, Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, called for convening UN Security Council meeting to consider the threat endangering peace in South Asia in particular owing to India's inhuman and oppressive policies toward Kashmiris. In Muzaffarabad today, an album of photographs was also presented to the chairman of the British Parliament's human rights committee depicting human rights violations in held Kashmir.